

Creativity and the Working Artist/Teacher:
The Relationships

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Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education
Faculty of Education, Brock University
St. Catharines, Ontario

May 1996

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand the relationships between creativity and the working artist/teacher employed by an art college. The topic emerged from my job as an instructor at The Ontario College of Art which was used as the primary data resource and provided the highest caliber of professionals to chose from.

Existent data were used to facilitate the study generated by the research of Cawelti, Rappaport, and Wood (1992). The data were generated by a group of 5 faculty members from The University of Northern Iowa, recognized for their expertise in the arts (a painter, a poet, a sculptor, a novelist, and a photographer). They were asked to respond to the following statement: "In as much detail as you like, list the things that you did, thought, or felt the last time you created an artistic product."

Cawelti, Rappaport, and Wood (1992) produced three models of the creative process, each building on the previous, with the resultant third, being in my opinion, an excellent illustration (text/visual) of the creative process. Model three (Appendix D) presented a "multi-dimensional view of the creative process: time, space, observatility, and consciousness" (p. 90).

Model three utilized a visual mapping device along the bottom of the page linked to text segments above. Both the visual and the text were interrelated so that they harmonized into a comprehensive "picture." The participants of this qualitative study were asked to

consider model three from their professional perspective as artist/teachers.

The interpretive sciences directed the methodology. The hermeneutic circle of continuous reflection from the whole to the part and back to the whole was an important aspect of the data analyses. Four members of the Foundation Department at The Ontario College of Art were the key participants.

A series of conversational interviews was the primary source of data collection, this was augmented by observation, field notes, and follow up telephone interviews. Transcripts of interviews were returned to participants for reflection and the telephone was used to discuss any additional points raised.

Analysis consisted of coding and organizing data according to emerging themes. These themes formed the basis for the narrative stories. The text of the narrative stories were given back to each participant for further comment. Revisions were made until both the researcher and the participants felt that the stories reflected reality. The resultant whole was critiqued from the researcher's perspective.

The significance of this study was discussed as it pertains to the working artist/teacher and areas in need of further study are pointed out.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank all those who have helped me on my journey; to my many students who have shaped my ideas and my fellow teachers.

There are many who should be personally mentioned, above all are those who have had to endure these past few months.

I thank for all her support and love my wife Jean, to whom, 14 years ago, I dedicated a much slimmer pre marriage MFA masters thesis. We didn't realize then the richness that lay ahead, but the intensity of those few weeks of writing, at Stong Farm House, on York University's Keele Street Campus, told us more about the future than we could have known.

To my three children; Kristin, Nicolas, and Thomas; my parents Tony and Joy, for their love and support and all those others without whom none of this happens.

I would also like to acknowledge the assistance I received from The Ontario College of Art and in particular, The Director of Student Services, Nora McCardell Ph.D., who's gentle nudging helped me to make the initial decision to enroll in the M.Ed. program at Brock University.

And lastly to Innstead Co-operative, for providing stable housing; literally our foundation for the past 11 years.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to increase the understanding of the creative process of the working artist/teacher employed by an art college. Four artist/teachers comprise the group that was studied, 2 male and 2 female. They had taught for over 20 years each and are nationally and internationally exhibited artists. Their individual narrative stories comprise the heart of the study.

The study does not claim to be more than a scratch at the surface of an age old dilemma, namely the concept of creativity.

Background to the Problem and Rationale for Study

The Concept of Creativity

The concept of creativity is something that I have struggled with on a daily basis. As a working artist/teacher at a large art college, I asked myself, is creativity something you are born with or can it be taught? Are some people more creative than others? Who says when someone is creative and by what criteria are these judgments made? How important is memory and childhood to the working artist? What relationship is there to artists' work in the studio and their work as a teacher? How much does being teachers of art influence their work?

All these questions revolve around a central concept, creativity. I looked at possible answers to such questions, utilizing a qualitative methodology to produce four narrative stories.

A Personal Reflection

Working as a professional sculptor for 20 years and teacher of art processes at an art college for the past 8, I have been intensely involved with creativity and am, needless to say, intrigued by its process.

To state that I do not understand it, grasp it, fully comprehend it, is an understatement. This is not to suggest that I do not have many opinions on its nature, but simply to acknowledge that creativity contains elements that I cannot pin down.

Its elusive nature draws me, allowing as it does, for large areas of gray. The old saying "Those who say they know, know least" is given validity in its embrace.

I know creativity exists, I know when it is operative. When functioning, I feel it enveloping my body--I am totally engaged--held and working.

When I was younger this encounter with creativity was an extremely intense experience. I worked for hours, all night explosions of effort on new projects were common expressions. The intensity of these occurrences lessened, or rather, became more compartmentalized over time. However, many of the underlying currents still hold. The processes involved are still the same. But can I explain them in a few words? The simple answer is, no.

It is as though it is invisible, seen in a momentary glance in the mirror, but as I turn to grasp, it vanishes. I swipe at the disappeared image, my hand whisking the empty air.

It was my hope that by engaging in the process of a qualitative study, I could come to understand creativity, and its relationship to the professional artist/teacher to a greater extent.

My teaching method.

As a practicing artist/teacher I am involved in the process of uncovering each student's potential creative self. This process is special, magical, and unnamable.

I believe it is simplistic to construct meaning for another person. The meaning must come from a shared investigation into the content of the work, in relationship with the student. This dialogue is the basis of the philosophical hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer (1986) whose work I have depended on for guidance throughout this study.

When a student opens to his or her creative self, allowing it to come forth, meaningful work is created. This is echoed in Kincheloe, Steinberg, and Tippins' (1992) discussion of Albert Einstein and education when they say, "the same is true for consciousness, as meaning sensitive intelligence is present wherever an entity can tune into the woven fabric of cosmic information, the implicate order of the universe" (p. 93).

I see my job as facilitator not director.

Does this suggest that I never interpret student's work? Of course not, but I do not see it as paramount or exclusive. I try to

work in "the delicacy of what is preverbal, unverbilized, and unverbilizable" as the British psychologist Winnicott, is quoted in Fuller (1989) when discussing the sculptor Henry Moore (p. 5). I try to tap the creative core of the individual I am in dialogue with--the art object is the vehicle. In an art therapy context, Moon (1994) talked directly to this concept. "I listen to the whole of the communication and at every turn resist the seductive pull to analyze, dissect and label" (p. 64).

In my opinion, this is what interpreting art is about. There are multiple paths into a work--one must choose one--but it is not the only one. New and alternate interpretations are swimming near the surface and deep within the internal logic of the work, always asking to be looked at from a multitude of perspectives.

This multiplicity of meanings, and the direct communication of an art object, is a concept that Gadamer (1986) discussed in great detail. He related, by means of the art-engaged dialogue, an understanding of the mystery that must take place between viewer and viewed. That the art object has no meaning without this engagement, and that this meaning is in continuous dependence on the viewer, in other words the meaning is not fixed, but is fluid and changeable depending on the state of the individual. I elaborate on this theme throughout this text and it is fundamental to Gadamer's presentation of philosophical hermeneutics.

Blandy and Hoffman (1993) called artists' attention to eco-theory and community-based approaches for art education. They go on to talk of the interconnectivity of all aspects of life and the difficulty presented when art is made separate. They elaborate and

quote Snyder (1990): "to be conscious of this simultaneity is 'to know the spirit of a place...to realize that you are a part of a part and that the whole is made of parts, each of which is whole'" (p. 27).

This concept is found repeated in Gadamer's (1986) understanding and explanation of contemporary philosophical hermeneutics as he examines Heidegger's hermeneutic circle.

Time and Change

The concepts of time and change play a central role in this thesis, although again they are difficult to pin down. To help in this I have drawn on Jarvis' (1992) Paradoxes of Learning with specific reference to the chapter "Paradox of Living and Learning in Society."

I was intrigued by this book, but what convinced me that I must absorb it in its entirety, was Jarvis' diagrammatic presentations of The Process of Internalization (Figure 1) and The Processes of Internalization and Externalization (Figure 2). These two diagrams illustrated something I had been thinking about, but had not solidified. It is to do with, but not totally contained in, the concept of change, which in turn is related to the concept of time, and in turn the definition of creativity that this study most readily agrees with. It is put forward by the psychiatrist John Young who wrote in his 1985 article, "What is Creativity?", that "creativity is the actualizing of our potential. It is the expression of ourselves in our becoming. It is our 'being becoming.' It is our adventure into the unknown" (p. 77).

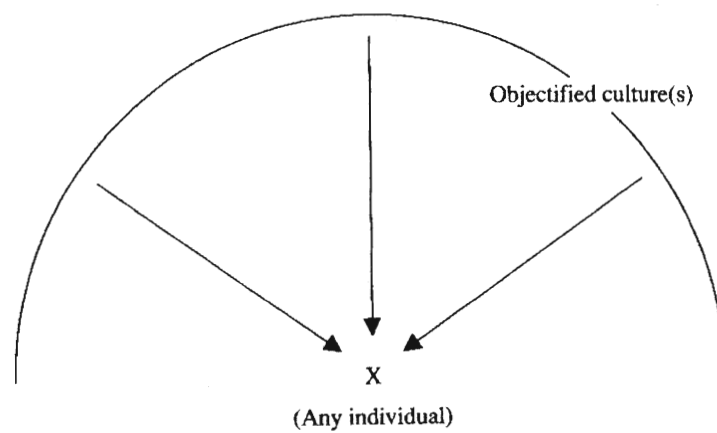


Figure 1. The process of internalization
(Jarvis, 1992, p. 20).

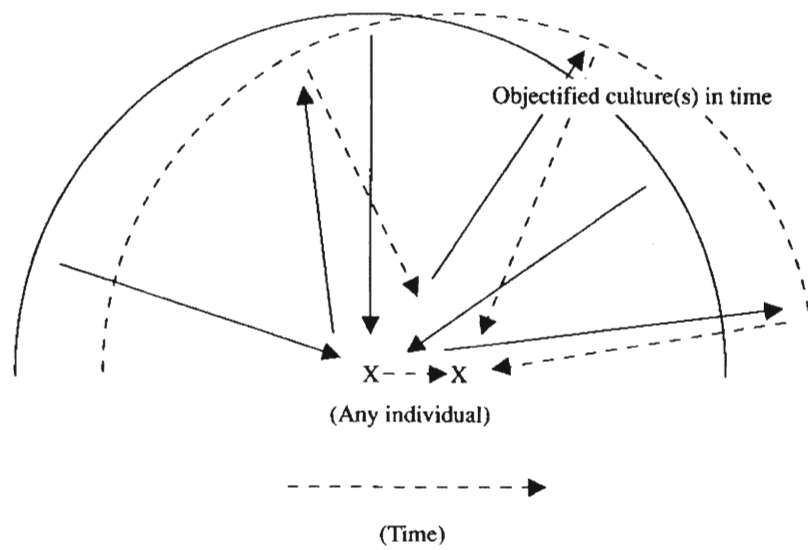


Figure 2. The processes of internalization and externalization (Jarvis, 1992, p. 25).

Figure 2 includes a dotted line indicating time. Jarvis (1992) used the concept of time to explain the struggle between the desire for constancy in life and the impossibility of this actually occurring. This appears a simple thing, but most people are not aware of it. They maintain a perception of the world and their being in it as constant. It is this illusion of stability that enables the self to accept the flux.

This visual presentation was an Ah-Ha! or eureka experience for me (Wallas, 1926). It has the ability to undermine all perceived security. Jarvis talked of this shift, or change in time, as gradual and unseen. It is only knowable in a historical sense, as in "overview." But once seen and understood, it can be internalized, and effect "vision."

I believe it had this effect on me because it expressed in a visual manner, that which Naipaul (1987) wrote an entire novel, scratching at. In his Enigma of Arrival, the concept of the gradual creeping of inevitable change that accompanies life is vividly portrayed in the study of minute details. The (autobiographical based) protagonist walks the gardens of a run down estate on which his rented cottage is located. The estate, once wealthy and grand, is now in a state of slow decay.

The novel takes place over an extended period of time. From the details of creeping change, the reader must stitch the plot together. The protagonist wishes to control the vision of perfection he encounters in the garden. However, he comes to realize it is only a selected moment in history and that it's true nature is constant flux.

It is this dichotomy that Jarvis' (1992) diagrams vividly illustrated. The parallel between these two books, one academic and the other a novel, is powerful.

Jarvis (1992) viewed constant change as the catalyst for disjuncture, a point at which learning can occur. Disjuncture "occurs whenever there is lack of accord between the external world experienced by human beings and their internal biographical interests or knowledge" (p. 83).

The following existentialist statement can appear deceptively simple: "Human beings are always in the process of becoming...time does not stand still, and so the process of becoming continues for as long as there is life" (p. 101). This thought can have a strong effect on one's perception of life.

Jarvis (1992) considered existentialism, because as he suggested, words like being and becoming are relatively rare in the educational lexicon. These words suggest constant development and change which are necessary components for learning. It is in being and becoming that the authentic reflective person presides, expressing independent thought to arrive at a creative and critical state. When considering this in relation to teaching, Jarvis (1992) made an interesting point:

both creativity and criticality imply that nothing should be beyond the scope of reflective thought and nobody should stand above or beyond the possibility of contradiction...(In education educators realize) that they should create situations where problems are posed and students and teachers engage in dialogue. (p. 114)

Jarvis later quoted Freire (1972) to further illustrate this point:

Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teacher. The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in their turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. (p. 53)

This "engagement in dialogue" is similar to Gadamer's (1986) reflections on the dialogue with art. It is the edge of one's being that must be continually in motion towards that which has not been created. This is the essence of the creative self.

In my opinion the four narrative stories presented in Chapter 4 exemplify this concept by their active relationship to their work.

Problem Statement and Preliminary Research Questions

This qualitative study explored creativity and its relationship to four artist/teachers at an art college.

With a clarified understanding of extending existing research, (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993), I utilized data generated by the research of Cawelti, Rappaport, and Wood (1992). The data were generated by a group of 5 faculty members from The University of

Northern Iowa, recognized for their expertise in the arts (a painter, a poet, a sculptor, a novelist, and a photographer). They were asked to respond to the following statement: "In as much detail as you like, list the things that you did, thought, or felt the last time you created an artistic product."

Other than providing each participant with a copy of the above article and to suggest that they might read it for a common departure point, it was my intention to utilize the conversational interview as the primary means of data collection (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Patton, 1990; Seidman, 1991).

The article provided the common thread for the interviews and provided a necessary position from which to formulate further thoughts.

Cawelti, Rappaport, and Wood (1992) produced three models of the creative process, each building on the previous, with the resultant third, being in my opinion, an excellent illustration (text/visual) of the creative process. Model three (Appendix D) presented a "multi-dimensional view of the creative process: time, space, observability, and consciousness" (p. 90).

Model Three utilized a visual mapping device along the bottom of the page linked to text segments above. Both the visual and the text were interrelated so that they harmonized into a comprehensive "picture." This was a powerful rendition of the complex mechanism involved in the creative process and was specifically referred to in the interviews. In my opinion this was a useful "visual," the participants would "flip" from one form of "reading" to another,

checking on the location of the concept, in time and space, in this manner it facilitated discussion.

Remain Open to The Process

I entered the research with the hope that I was going to learn, but was intent on remaining open to the process (Maitland-Gholson & Ettinger, 1994). I was cautioned from becoming directed too early in this process by Bogdan and Biklen (1992), when they stated "the qualitative researcher plans to use part of the study to learn what the important questions are. He or she does not assume that enough is known to recognize important concerns before undertaking the research" (p. 32), and by Patton (1990) who suggested that one work "without presupposing in advance what those important dimensions will be" (p. 41). I found Flinders and Mills (1993) useful in formulating early ideas.

To suggest, however, that it was not focused from the outset would be misleading. I wrote field notes prior to my first interview which indicate that I had a number of processes and questions planned. I include the following extensive quote because I believe it is interesting to compare early concepts to the final result:

Research data collection.

1. Know what you are going to do before you do it.
2. Know what you are going to collect.
3. Interview 1/2 hour only.

There can be preamble--but tape will only consist of exact reflection on questions.

The what & why of the interview.

Creativity and the Artist/Teacher: The relationships.

Are there relationships?

What are they?

Do you consider there to be relationships between your creative self and your teaching self?

(Humanism, holistic).

The notion of Narrative--Story to direct interview to narrative (Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995).

To relate to me a story that seems . . . that feels, I want the reality to come through.

Oh yes, I had the idea of trying the concept of concrete data being added "to make a metatheme come alive for the reader" (Tesch, 1988, p. 234).

I could ask my coauthors to bring a found object with them to the interview, for us to talk over--that I will ask for this object--That I will work these objects into something portable, part of the metatheme, and offer them to the examiners as a "response" to their relationship to the work.

I'd like to know what you think about the creative process and it's relationship to you as an artist.

How it relates to you as a teacher.

Let's put the money aside for the moment.

Is teaching important to you as a working artist?

How much does your creativity depend on your being a teacher?

(Field notes, March 4, 1996).

Preconceptions

As will be discussed further in Chapter 5, I realize now how my preconceptions were at play from the beginning of the research.

A good example was the separation of the two descriptors, artist and teacher. Even though I wrote them utilizing a slash to visually connect them, they were in my mind, separate entities. I discovered all four of the participants had already made this transition; for them they are synonymous actions, and I believe they found my separation of the action, artist/teacher, spurious to say the least.

This research study has helped me realize that I am in a transitional mode of being, I am in the process of integrating teaching self, with artist self. This could be seen in terms of "self actualization" which refers to the drive to develop to one's full potential (Goldstein, 1939; Maslow, 1968).

Another realization was the tremendous vitality I was tapping into, with a total of over 90 years of professional artist/teacher experience shared between the participants.

At several points this was overwhelming to me because it correctly asked the pointed question, "Who are you to be asking these questions?" For however benign I tried to make the process sound in my introductory letter, I was entering their private space. It was a profound experience; I was able, through this study, to hear the collected wisdom on a subject close to my being. Though I am not as far on the path as those that I chose to study, their openness in sharing their personal thoughts reaffirmed the importance of their role as artist/teachers, at the same time reaffirming the

complexity of it. I will elaborate on this in Chapter 3 when I discuss the methodology.

I am very grateful to my participants' participation and only wish this were a more worthy product. That they were not jumping over themselves to become participants in this study, I realize in retrospect, is understandable.

Definition of Terms

As key terms arise I shall clarify their meanings. Appendix A will provide an alphabetically ordered glossary of terms.

Outline of the Subsequent Chapters

Chapter 1 has provided an introduction to this study of four artist/teachers' experience of the creative process in their capacities as teachers at a major art college. The purpose was identified and background information and rationale were also provided. Chapter 2 will provide a literature review that will trace the historical views of the creative process and contemporary literature on the subject. Chapter 3 will describe the methodology used in this study. In Chapter 4 I will present the findings of the interviews by utilizing the words of the participants to build individual narrative stories and Chapter 5 will interpret these findings, and will conclude with a summary and discuss further research.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This literature review presents a selection from the multitude of studies and theories that have been put forward to explain the creative process.

Psychologists have been the most prolific, producing thousands of studies, since J. P. Guilford called for more research, in his ground breaking paper published in 1950.

Jane Piirto (1992) cited an ERIC (Educational Resources Information Centers) search from 1982 to 1992 which showed 1,750 references on creativity and education.

It is my intention to elaborate on a number of these. There are roughly two points of view with a third straddling the two. Those who believe creativity is a measurable, quantifiable, teachable "thing," and those who do not, and those who want, in a sense, to stand on the fence.

My sanity was saved when I read an article (that I will further review later in this chapter) in The Journal of Creative Behavior, by Peile and Acton (1994), who "claim that the concept of creativity can provide a synthesis of the deterministic and random processes. A creative action is neither deterministic nor random, but it can bring together and account for each of these processes" (p. 54). This synthesis is achieved by looking at time differently.

The concept of time as a theoretical framework has been repeated and further developed elsewhere in this thesis. It is

especially important to the work of Jarvis (1992), which I analyzed in Chapter 1 (p. 5). It is repeated later in this chapter in a discussion of Gadamer's (1986) concept of the moving, nonfixed horizon. In my field notes of March 23, 1996, I wrote of the importance of Peile and Acton (1994):

I wrote a note to myself, "acknowledge extensive psychological study into creativity 'Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking' et al." I go to the stacks, pull a bound Journal collection of The Journal of Creative Behavior (1994) and read 'Determinist, Stochastic and Creative Cosmologies In The Field of Creativity' (Peile & Acton, 1994) and Bam! its like I'm reading what I just said to myself...I speed read it--it slightly knocks me over with it's accuracy to my field of vision at the present. It means there are others of us thinking--feeling the same thing--I can now build on this arm--as the "tests" leave me cold. So just as I feel the encroaching coldness to an article by Mednick (1962) and his theory of associations. I break new ground.

This "new ground" is the continually expanding horizon of Gadamer (1986) discussed in more detail in this chapter.

Personal Observations

A literature review forced me to come face-to-face with the enormity of the quest. A simple voyage to the stacks is infiltrated with the inevitable expanding universe of thought and counter thought. This is not to suggest that I envisaged an inquiry into

creativity as a walk in the park, but little did I realize how dark it was going to get.

Creativity, are you there?

Every now and then, I would feel the burst of energy, which signified that I was going beyond, into something that would grab me, take me on the hunt, the smell was close--the meat was offered, I could again feel the surge. Was this the creative, the elusive, that which I was to pin down? That which always ran to hide, as quickly as it's head was raised.

If this were it, then what was I playing at, with this attempt to capture the freedom I craved and lock it to the page. No wonder it fought to retain it's elusive presence, every time there was a glimmer it would die as quickly. To place it all in some convenient order seems an impossible mission. Gadamer's (1986) Truth and Method, is taking hold, it talks to me, "...we saw that to understand a text always means to apply it to ourselves and to know that, even if it must always be understood in different ways, it is still the same text presenting itself to us in these different ways" (p. 359).

That the study of creativity is a paradox. That has been my dilemma. But I like the paradoxical...that is why I'm attracted to wanting to know it--to accept that it cannot be explained. This does not stop the desire to understand. Usually those explanations I like best, are those that are most metaphysical. Be careful of the trap. (field notes, March 6, 1996)

What is Creativity?

The question of what creativity is, or put a more personal way, what art is, has yet to be answered. As Jeffers' (1994) study involving pre-service elementary teachers found, the desire to answer the question, what is art, and the corresponding desire not to categorize children's art projects, created deep tensions. "Resolving or relieving the tensions is not necessarily the issue. Rather, it is a matter of experiencing the tensions in productive or constructive ways. For it is through such tensions that we are called into being" (p. 96).

The definition of creativity that this study most readily agrees with, is put forward by the psychiatrist John Young who wrote in his 1985 article, "What is Creativity?", that "creativity is the actualizing of our potential. It is the expression of ourselves in our becoming. It is our 'being becoming.' It is our adventure into the unknown" (p. 77).

Explanations of this type talk to me most directly.

The Creative View

In their journal article, Peile and Acton (1994) placed creativity into three distinct categories. The "determinist view" "whose methodologies assume a knowable, predictable universe" (p. 49). The "stochastic view," where creativity occurs at the intersection of a deterministic order and a random order. And the "creative view" which they describe as follows,

this cosmology sees the determinist and random conceptions as just approximations of what is really a creative process and that the whole of the universe is engaged in a flowing, unending, creative process where all parts of the universe are also engaged in a creative movement. This position sees creativity as a synthesis of the perspectives of randomness and determinism in contrast to the stochastic view which adopts a mixture of both perspectives. (p. 50)

Peile and Acton (1994) called for more extensive research into the "creative view" which, for them, is tied into an understanding of time and its different relational aspects, depending on the perspective taken. I will briefly outline their thesis, as it relates directly to the theoretical framework of this research study.

From our prospective, for example, time is viewed as stable when compared to the hydrogen atom, which is generally assumed to last forever. However, the hydrogen atom was created and will disintegrate, even if this time frame is related to the creation and destruction of the universe itself. From the perspective of another hydrogen atom, its creative becoming is more apparent. This creative becoming, from beginning to end, is vast in relation to our own. Our own time frame can then be contrasted to a sub-atomic particle, like the meson, with a one millionth of second life span, which appears random and chaotic. From the view of meson, however, this life span would appear stable.

In this manner it is possible to reconsider our own subjective view of time. As Peile and Acton (1994) comment, "The creativity of our own human existence lies between these extremes. The

hydrogen atom, the meson, and human life are all creative processes it is just that the time frames or speed of the creative process is different in each case" (p. 55).

It is this concept of "time," as relative to each individual and that this constant movement is not a progression so much as an "opening," that is in my opinion, the corner stone of the creative conundrum.

It was with this in mind that I referred to Jarvis (1992) in Chapter 1 and note a relationship to Kincheloe (1991) when he suggested, "standing at the intersection of his or her own subjectivity and that which is being observed, the researcher discovers a crack in time and space through which he or she might crawl" (p. 174).

Theoretical Framework

I will briefly describe my experience of discovering the work of Gadamer (1986) and how this discovery, in turn, was distilled in his writing and it's relationship to myself as researcher discovering a "crack in time."

The Horizon

Every corner I turned opened another door. I vividly remember, at a midpoint of the research, following a lead to the stacks and finding the needed book. Within easy reach of my eye were Heidegger, Hegel, Habermas, Nietzsche, and more, my heart quickened as my eyes feasted on the spines. The names were enough. The

vastness of thought and knowledge that each volume represented was overwhelming. I sank to the floor, hugely elated, vastly overburdened. "I can not do this. I can not possibly do this--there is too much," I screamed to my mind.

I took the volume I had come for and slunk back to the cubicle, cracked the pages on Hans-Georg Gadamer and philosophical hermeneutics and began to read. I became immersed in the thoughts of an individual, in time, and in place, that these thoughts were both present and past was made abundantly clear. Time flew--notes, thoughts, connections, the hermeneutic circle began, never ending.

I listen to a 1974 taped lecture of Gadamer, a long ramble into the historical influences of his understanding of today's hermeneutics. Towards the end of the lecture he says:

The work of art answers, or better, in answering, it asks - it is asking - it is challenging - I am asked - in the encounter with a work of art - it is not exhaustible by my own fixticeous superiority. I am in the game. And in so far as it is meant (to be) a work of art, nobody will say that it is psychology . . . it is the intention of the artist, which I follow every scale - the intention of the artist is not the work of art - that I will be a great artist when it would be sufficient to have intention.
(underline mine, cassette recording, OISE)

In my opinion it is the statement "I am in the game," that clearly illustrates his point and corresponds to Fromm's (1986) concept of ONE and what Peile and Acton (1994) refer to as the creative view, and what Jarvis (1992) is saying in Paradoxes of

Learning. It is this engagement with the moment of being, that is this qualitative study's realized point.

Gadamer (1986) provided me with the concept of the continuing horizon. This horizon is always there but it shifts as new knowledge throws out the old. This is perpetual in a thinking, active, creative being, it is not static and hence, to lock it to a page is difficult. It shifts. This concept relates visually to the diagrams on page six from Jarvis (1992).

The historical movement of human life consists in the fact that it is never utterly bound to any one standpoint, and hence can never have a truly closed horizon. The horizon is, rather, something into which we move and that moves with us.

Horizons change for a person who is moving. Thus the horizon of the past, out of which all human life lives and which exists in the form of tradition, is always in motion. It is not historical consciousness that first sets the surrounding horizon in motion. But in it this motion becomes aware of itself. (Gadamer, 1986, p. 271)

Historical Perspective

The Muses

From the beginning of time, humankind has been pulled by the muses of creativity. To place it in its correct box has been the aim of philosophers and mystics--to the contemporary age of psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, artists, botanists, politicians, and more recently by business executives, the list is

endless, as every field of study touches creativity or rather creativity touches every field of study (Ochse, 1990; Piirto, 1992; Weisberg, 1993; Young-Bruehl, 1991).

As Funk (1982) wrote when he was commenting on Erich Fromm, "The mystical experience of the ONE is the experience of life that is lived wholly in the being mode" (p. 275).

This, I realized, is the philosophy of creativity. It is the philosophy that draws me, as the mystic muses directed Plato. This literature review is but a scratch on the surface of an ongoing quest that I, as a living, breathing, being who is continually becoming, will dance with forever.

Plato and Aristotle.

The contrast of the positions taken by Plato and Aristotle serve to exemplify, what is today, still a dividing line between those who study creativity. In a sense it boils down to those who believe that it can be explained and those who do not, that it is metaphysical or physical (Rothenberg & Hausman, 1976). Today's rationalistic world view, presented by the scientific notion that all can be explained, is that which Aristotle is acknowledged being the father of, while the "New Age" or post-modern is more aligned with the thoughts of Plato (Piirto, 1992).

Plato (circa, 300 BC/1961) emphasizes inspiration as an important component of the creative process. We can see in the Platonic dialogue devoted to the creative process involved in the production of poetry, as Socrates says to Ion in a discussion on the poetry of Homer,

She first makes men inspired, and then through these inspired ones others share in the enthusiasm, and a chain is formed, for the epic poets, all the good ones, have their excellence, not from art (skill), but are inspired, possessed, and thus they utter all these admirable poems...once they launch into harmony and rhythm, they are seized with the Bacchic transport, and are possessed...for the poet is a light and winged thing, and holy, and never able to compose until he has become inspired, and is beside himself, and reason is no longer in him. (p. 219)

This notion of the divinely inspired, that of the muse, is contrasted by Aristotle who presented a rationalist view, all that is needed to be creative is already present. He rejects any supernatural force or mystery in the process (Rothenberg & Hausman, 1976).

A Definition of Creativity

There is no one generally accepted definition of creativity, even so, in this section I shall describe various authors' attempts to do so.

Treffinger (1986) stated "it seems unlikely that there will ever be such a 'general theory'" (p. 15). He goes on to identify more than 60 instruments which purport to measure some aspects of creativity. Ford and Harris (1992) similarly confirmed the difficulty of trying to find a single definition, in their "The Elusive Definition of Creativity" they say, "like such other terms in the

social sciences and psychological professions as 'intelligence' and 'achievement', the concept of 'creativity' remains elusive" (p. 186). They went on to state that as a society we place more emphasis on academic achievement and intelligence and that "even standardized tests tend to ignore creativity" (p. 186).

Young (1985) describes creativity as a "honorific" term (p. 77) because of the difficulty associated with finding a universally accepted definition. Daniels-McGhee and Davis (1994) equated imagination and creativity, as does Young, in describing our ability to make things up, "something new and valuable." This is echoed by Ruggiero (1990) when he states, "creative ideas are by definition new and unexpected departures from the usual and the accepted" (p. 57). Young (1985) continued:

it is what creative persons do or make...It is what creative persons are...Creativity is the paradoxical integration of doing and being...It may involve methods or techniques but should not be equated with them...Methods, when they become the rules for behavior, stifle creativity. (p. 78)

Creativity for Young involved three components: skills, newness, and value. "It is the skill of bringing about something new and valuable" (p. 78). Viewed as a skill, Stout (1995), Torrance (1972) and Young (1985), believed that creativity can be taught.

Another approach to describing creativity is contained in the work of Piaget (1962) who put forward the theory of disequilibrium, whereby, new information throws us into a state of unrest and we strive to assimilate this and thus regain equilibrium, this "theory of cognitive development relates directly to the creative process...For

Piaget, an ability to evaluate a situation from a multitude of perspectives was a necessary factor in the creative process" (Ford & Harris, 1992, p. 188). As Piaget (1962) said:

this is why play is accompanied by a feeling of freedom and is the herald of art, which is the full flowering of this spontaneous creation...(and) creative imagination, which is the assimilating activity in a state of spontaneity, does not diminish with age, but as a result of the correlative progress of accommodation, is gradually reintegrated in intelligence, which is thereby correspondingly broadened. (pp. 152-289)

A similar explanation with fresh insights is found in the work of Csikszentmihalyi (1990) when he gave to the words "flow" and "optimal experience," the interpretation that has often been used to define the creative process. He described the rare moments of "optimal experience" as, "a sense of exhilaration, a deep sense of enjoyment that is long cherished and that becomes a landmark in memory for what life should be like." He described "flow" as follows "the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter" (pp. 3-4).

Theories of Creativity

Accepting that creativity is difficult to define has not stopped many from presenting theories as to how it operates. In the following section I shall review a number of theories that have surfaced over the past century. I shall then look in some detail at

those who believe it is a measurable unit, and who present theories based on quantifiable data collection.

The Ah-Ha! or Eureka Experience

A popular theory of creativity presents it as a series of linear stages, the Ah-Ha! or eureka experience. This concept can be traced to the work of the 19th century German physiologist Herman Helmholtz, who presented a 3-stage model. This was further developed in the work of Wallas (1926), whose often referred to 'four stages of creativity' model, popularized by Edwards (1989), is the standard model.

Wallas (1926) referred to writings of the mathematician Poincaré (1924) who expressed a sudden "illumination" experience in solving difficult problems, and that these sudden "illumination's" were preceded by long periods of intense work. Wallas (1926) then postulated a four stage linear progression that consisted of; preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification.

Getzels (1980) proposed a 5-stage model with a similar linear progression; first insight, saturation, incubation, illumination, and verification (cited in Edwards, 1989). Ochse (1990) added that if one is at a low state of arousal (i.e. just before sleep), the probability of the "illumination" is increased.

Udall (1996) postulated an interesting variation on this concept by utilizing the Mobius Ring, which can be constructed by giving a half twist of 180° to a rectangular strip of paper and joining it to the other end. "The twist or 'flip' sets up a living paradox in that the inside and outside are one and the same thing"

(p. 41). By using a Mobius Ring, Udall allows for a three dimensional conceptualization of Getzels 5-stage model. He utilizes the model to allow for conceptual "flips" from the intuitive to the intellectual as the five stages are traversed.

The Bisociation of Matrices

Another example of a theory of creativity, which although not a "stages" model does have similarities to Wallas (1926), is to be found in the work of Koestler (1964) who based his theory on his immense collection of biographical stories of known creative persons.

In The Act of Creation, Koestler (1964) advanced the theory of the bisociation of matrices which is the juxtaposition of formerly unrelated ideas. He goes to great lengths to illustrate that this concept is not just the simple relationship of two previously independent thoughts coming together. Koestler believed that bisociation is complex and a high order function and even though he acknowledges that lower order bisociation's do occur, they will not produce "great" new ideas. In this sense it is an elitist approach to creativity. When bisociation happens, it is akin to the Ah-Ha! or eureka experience.

He notes that once a bisociation of matrices is made, it is difficult to see how they could not have been made before. A personal example of this is Gadamer's (1986) concept of the continuous horizon and Jarvis' (1992) notion of disjuncture, these two matrices came together, or bisociated in the formation of this thesis.

Artificial Intelligence

An fairly new area of investigation into creativity theory is that of artificial intelligence.

Artificial intelligence investigates the nature of intelligence in general terms and applies it to computer models to simulate human intelligence (Boden, 1990, 1994). Human attributes of the mind such as; seeing, speaking, storytelling, and thinking, are aspects of human nature that scientists try to simulate in computers using computational ideas. These can help us understand how human creativity is possible.

Although as Margaret Boden in her 1994 publication Dimensions of Creativity rightly remind us: "This does not mean that creativity is predictable nor even that an original idea can be explained in every detail after it has appeared. But we can draw on computational ideas in understanding in scientific terms how 'intuition' works" (p. 85).

Creativity as a Predictable Phenomena

The notion that creativity may have predictable phenomena has many adherents. A good example of a research study that looked for predictable factors in creativity is the now famous longitudinal study by Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi (1976). It consisted of standardized tests being administered on 321 art students' personality, cognition, and perceptual characteristics, followed by tests 7 years later on 31 of the original students, to see if there was a relationship to creativity development. In art school the students exhibited the popular stereotypical characteristics of the

artist: non-conforming, aloof, introspective, self-sufficient, radical, experimental. With the follow-up tests, Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi "found that essentially none of the measures obtained in art school related to career success. No standardized test of intelligence, cognition or divergent thinking related to later success" (Weisberg, 1993, p. 78).

Getzels (1987) has done a further follow up to this study and it is reported that there is "only a small positive relationship between problem-finding and success as an artist" (cited in Piirto, 1992, p. 127).

These longitudinal studies seems to support the notion that it is difficult to predict, with any degree of certainty, those factors which will determine the potential creative person.

These studies do, however, amass large amounts of data that are useful for follow up-studies.

Creativity as a Measurable Unit

There have been many who believe that if creativity could be predicted, then similarly it could be packaged and sold as a trainable commodity. In this section I shall list a selection of those who have created theories that endeavor to package creativity. An example is de Bono's (1970, 1978) coRT Lateral Thinking program that is used in thousands of schools internationally (Piirto, 1992).

The following theories are a direct result of Guilford's (1950, 1967, 1988) theory of divergent-production, which I shall discuss in further detail in the following section. The concept of the divergent-production as a theory of creativity is used by those who

wish to use a system whereby creativity can be quantified, measured, ordered, and understood in a predictable manner. For de Bono (1978) it is lateral thinking, and Mednick (1962) remote associative, for Guilford (1967) divergent-production all of which point to "different" ways of making conceptual associations.

Gordon (1961), Synectics, the joining together of different and apparently irrelevant elements. Meeker (1973), divergent production exercises; Taylor (1969), Multiple Talent teaching; Williams (1986), ideas for thinking and feeling; Samples (1976), metaphorization (working with metaphors); Eberle (1982), visualization; Crabbe and Betts (1990), creativity training exercises based on many of the above concepts. The list can literally extend to thousands, as it trickles down from academic research to the self-help shelves.

An example of a recent reincarnation of similar material repackaged and targeted to the aging "boomer," is Cameron and Byran's (1992) The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity, comprised of daily exercises to tap the creative inner-self. I have known people who have utilized this method to their satisfaction; it is closely related to the humanist view of creativity which I shall discuss in a subsequent section. The quest for the creative self is highly developed in our post religious society, helping The Artist's Way to enter the Globe and Mail's best sellers list in February of 1996, and for Cameron to be in demand as a lecturer and leader of workshops.

J. P. Guilford.

I shall now review in some detail the work of the psychologist, J. P. Guilford as much of the work referred to in the previous section is directly based on his research. Guilford (1950) presented his paper, "Creativity" in The American Psychologist, which is credited with the growth of interest by psychologists in creativity as a measurable phenomenon. In it he called for research into ways of enhancing creativity in children and to find ways of enhancing the creative personality.

Guilford's theory, the Structure of the Intellect was published in 1967 in the journal article "The Nature of Human Intelligence," in which he proved that it was possible to measure divergent-production, utilizing factors that he analyzed. He discussed production rather than thinking and divergent rather than convergent. In divergent-production, fluency, flexibility, and originality, diverge to form new connections, rather than converging on a single concept. He modified this work in 1988 when he published "Some Changes in the Structure-Of-Intellect Model." Guilford galvanized a whole generation of researchers into the field of creativity study (Pirto, 1992; Weisberg, 1993).

The factors listed below, that Guilford (1950) suggested would be found in divergent-production, are all to be found in today's creativity enhancement movement (Pirto, 1992).

1. Fluency: "...the person who is capable of producing a large number of ideas per unit of time,...has a greater chance of having significant ideas."
2. Novelty: "The degree of novelty of which the person is capable."

3. Flexibility: "...the ease with which he changes set."
4. Synthesizing ability: "...the organizing of ideas into larger, more inclusive patterns."
5. Analyzing ability: "Symbolic structures must often be broken down before new ones can be built."
6. Reorganization or redefinition of organized wholes: "...in the nature of a transformation of an existing object into one of different design, function, or use."
7. Degree of Complexity: "How many interrelated ideas can the person manipulate at the same time?"
8. Evaluation: "Creative work that is to be realistic or accepted must be done under some degree of evaluation or restraint" (1950, pp. 452-453).

It is interesting to note that he had this to say in his original 1950 address,

I am, of course, referring to the factorial conception of personality...If the idea of applying this type of description to a living, breathing individual is distasteful, remember that this geometric picture is merely a conceptual model designed to encompass the multitude of observable facts, and to do it in a rational, communicable, and economical manner. (p. 447)

In my opinion many of Guilford's disciples, in their enthusiasm to measure, lost site of his wisdom.

E. Paul Torrance.

One of those who took the measurement of creativity to new heights and who was greatly influenced by Guilford's work was E.

Paul Torrance, who developed the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT, 1966).

The influence of Torrance's theory derives from the success of his tests of creativity...(they) dominate the field of creativity research to such an extent that, in what was intended as a comprehensive meta-analytic evaluation of the long-term effects of various creativity training programs, only studies that employed the Torrance tests were included. (Baer, 1993, p. 15)

The unfortunate result of this popularity is that divergent thinking or divergent production, as it is also called, has become synonymous with creativity, rather than it being a possible function of it. Runco (1993) likes to remind us that divergent thinking is not synonymous with creativity and believes that the area is far from stagnant and encourages the continued evolution of the divergent thinking paradigm. Baer (1993) also suggested that there is still useful knowledge to be gained by continued research into divergent thinking theories and calls for a multilevel framework for thinking about creativity.

Torrance (1966) set out specifically to develop tests that would measure divergent thinking, not creativity. He developed these tests from Guilford's eight factors listed in the previous section and grouped them into four general categories; fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration.

The concept of being able to test for creativity will continue building on the notion that there is a rational explanation for creativity.

There are many who oppose this view, as represented by Sternberg and Lubart (1993, 1995) who stated: "these tests have served to squelch creativity as much as any institution in our society" (1995, p. 22).

The Humanistic Approach to Creativity

In this section I shall briefly review the concept of creativity from the humanist perspective.

Creativity as the life blood of "the being," is the basis of humanist philosophy. They believe that human kind can find fulfillment through a creative life-giving outlook. This view of creativity is not so much interested in its measurement or predictability, but rather in its living presence, which places it in the metaphysical rather than the physical.

These views can be traced to that of the existentialists, "who held that people are part of their own environment but are free to choose what to make of themselves and their world" (Ochse, 1990, p. 17). Freud was influential in the existential discussion of creativity but later humanists rejected his contention that creativity resulted from the sublimation of a sexual drive (Ochse, 1990). There is a vast area of creative research under the psychological umbrella which the limitations of this review cannot extend to.

Self-Actualization

The humanists view creativity as a driving force of life. All healthy individuals will strive towards achieving self-actualization, that is, utilizing their potentials to the fullest possible extent, and it is creativity that will show the way (Adler, 1956; Frankl, 1963; Fromm 1986; Maslow 1968; May, 1953; Rogers, 1954).

For a humanists psychologist such as Maslow (1968), it is "starting from experiential knowledge rather than from systems of concepts or abstract categories" (p. 9) that will lead the way to self-actualization. He goes on to say a person's creativity plays an important role, as the following quote exemplifies:

...since self-actualization or health must ultimately be defined as the coming to pass of the fullest humanness, or as the "Being" of the person, it is as if self-actualizing creativity were almost synonymous with, or a sine qua non aspect of, or a defining characteristic of, essential humanness. (p. 145)

Another humanist, Fromm (1986), repeated the notion that it is the creative that provides the living energies of life, the being becoming, essential to all life and to the self-actualizing process, he says:

An active human being does not forget himself; he is himself and is constantly becoming himself. He becomes more mature, he becomes more adult, he grows. A passive person is...an eternal suckling babe. What he consumes is ultimately of little consequence to him. (p. 35)

Fromm (1986) goes on to say, "One of life's greatest pleasures is to make use of our powers not to attain a goal but for the sake of

the activity itself" (underline mine, p. 89). This statement has a direct relationship to the creative self and Gadamer's (1986) notion of the dialogue with an art object. These actions are not taken with a goal in mind but rather are entered into to gain understanding. That creativity may be the search for the individual self as much as the self-actualized self is expressed by Edinger (1972) who says:

The experience of individuality is a mystery of being which transcends descriptive power. Each person has his own unique version of this experience which is incommunicable as such. Yet the form of the experience is universal and can be recognized by all men. In fact, it sometimes seems that the goal of the individual's psychic development is to come ever closer to the realization that his own personal, unique individuality is identical with the eternal archetypal individual. (p. 157)

Another perspective of the humanist point of view of creativity being central to life, can be found in the work of Rogers (1954). He postulated in "Toward a Theory of Creativity" that three conditions must be at play within the individual for a creative action to occur. He lists these as; an openness to experience which he describes as "a tolerance for ambiguity...and the ability to receive much conflicting information without forcing closure upon the situation"; an internal system of evaluating a product that is not dependent on the external world and lastly, "the ability to toy with elements and concepts" (p. 75).

The humanist explanation of creativity is attractive to me because it does not try to define creativity. Instead it is taken as an

empowered force in its own right. This can rattle the rationalist mind. The desire for answers is strong, the quest continues.

Creative Character Study

An area that has received much attention in the creativity literature is that of the famous creative person study. This model presupposes that by studying known creative persons, their patterns of behavior, their traits, their idiosyncrasies, we may better understand the creative process in general.

Koestler (1964) is a case in point, he based much of his speculation and developed his theory of the bisociation of matrices from extensive experience as a biographer of creative people.

To illustrate this point I will briefly present the work of two known creative people, one from the arts and one from the sciences, and place them in relationship to my own thoughts on teaching.

Two Teachers as Creative Beings

In his role as a teacher, Albert Einstein, expressed the need for educators to help students to leave school as harmonious personalities--not as specialists (Kincheloe, Steinberg, & Tippins, 1992). The internationally respected artist and teacher Joseph Beuys espoused a theory of total connectedness, he gave lectures on world-theory and global-economic stabilizing-systems. The lectures could extend into days and weeks; the blackboards for these lectures have been collected by major international museums.

To listen to either of these men express their theories put people into mesmerized trances, as the words became metaphors for galactic interplay. These men expounded creativity in their beings, through the life force that pulsed in their veins. "In any creative act...there is an implicate order which emerges as an expression of the creator's whole life, his or her Lebenswelt" (Kincheloe, Steinberg & Tippins, 1992, p. 91).

Joseph Beuys continues this thought when he said:

There's no need to start going on about formal creativity. The person takes on a sculptural quality himself: he gets interested, and he'll see that forms have context, that they have responsibility. You can't just tell a person to do something 'creative'. You have to think about the extended connections...I have to keep returning to the principle that the 'artistic' must cross over into every subject in the curriculum. (cited in Strachelhaus, 1991, p. 85)

I agree with this. I joke with my students "this is it--we are there," as I feel a surge of creative energy pulsate through the class. They laugh, "Come on Alex, tell us the secret." I want to shout, "This is it--this is all there is--we are it now." However, I realize we have a journey to make. To be a student demands a certain expectation of that journey. My experience concurs with Shutz (1991) that "it is more important to nurture creativity than to label it" (p. 30).

It is the nature of teaching to "know" each and every student in his or her unique way. The challenge for me is to continue trying to teach that which has no words, with words that allude to, but are

not controlling of what I want them to understand. This challenge is continually being renewed both in my studio and in the classroom.

Again in Joseph Beuys words;

This means everyone works for everyone, no one works just for himself; rather, everyone satisfies someone else's need's.

While I live off the achievements of others, I pass on something to others, and it's mutual. This is wonderfully clear in a discontinuous physiological organism like the beehive, in which the individual cells are not so entrenched as they are in a higher organism - such as the human body - but actually live detached from each other and can still move. (cited in Strachelhaus, 1991, p. 69)

What I believe we are all experiencing and trying to put into words is that which does not have words. It is the realization that things outside of the self, but created by the self, talk for us and to us, in ways that words cannot.

The artist and teacher Szekely (1988) made an interesting comment on this point when discussing encouraging creativity in art classes:

I had to find nonverbal ways of communicating with my students because they did not speak English. Later, in working with my English-speaking children, I found that these nonverbal techniques were still very effective and they felt more comfortable to me, as an artist, than lecturing. (p. 49)

Qualitative Studies

Young-Bruehl (1991) based her study of creativity on character study, as she says, "what creative people wish for themselves, for the psychic order in themselves is what they wish for their work, and also what they delineate when they talk about their way of being creative" (p. 11). These studies are qualitative in nature, they are descriptive and not directed towards quantifiable outcomes. The information they supply is found in the words of those who speak. There is a power in the individual and life lived that transcends the page to speak to those who want to hear.

Sloane and Sosniak (1985) studied 12 men and 8 women sculptors collecting data from conversational interviews and presenting findings in narrative form. Tavalin (1995) studied a group of 4 women in a writing workshop and similarly presents data in a qualitative fashion. She relates the "story" of one member of the group allowing it to represent the others. She based the choice of the "story telling" methodology on the work of Reason and Hawkins, (1990) article "Story Telling as Inquiry."

These qualitative studies on creative people were most interesting to me, and reinforced my desire to engage in my own study of creative individuals.

Summary

This chapter looked at a selection of the creativity literature. A number of different theories were reviewed and a theoretical

framework was suggested. Creativity touches all aspects of life's work. It has vast tentacles. I have scratched the surface.

As the section on creative character study illustrated, it is possible to gain understanding of creativity by listening to the stories of creative individuals, such "narrative stories" are presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

This study explores the creative process of the working artist/teacher employed by an art college. Chapter 3 chronologically describes the research process, from the selection of the participants to the data collection and recording procedures, through to the analysis methods.

The largest component of this description will be written as the "researcher's story." This method was chosen as it has a direct relationship to the "participant's stories" in Chapter 4.

The reason for this description serves several purposes. It enables the reader to have a full understanding of the procedures undertaken and thus, addresses the issue of transferability or generalizability, that is, how does what is written affect the readers existing knowledge (Bogden & Biklen, 1992).

After reviewing a selection of data write-up methods (Bogdan & Bilken, 1992; Le Compte & Preissle, 1993; Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Patton, 1990; Seidman, 1991), I was challenged by some words of Bogdan and Bilken,

...it also can be seen as an opportunity for broadening the choice of how to write. If we understand that writing up qualitative findings is an interpretive craft and that the text can take a variety of forms, researchers can be liberated from some of the conventions that inhibited their creative expressions. (p. 197)

The Nature of Inquiry

In an effort to help the reader understand the perspective that this qualitative study supports, I will present a lengthy quote from Kincheloe (1991). His writings on methodology for the teacher as researcher I read with enthusiasm, for he seemed to say what I felt. This particular selection deals with the problems of the rationalist world view.

The certainty of modernity has created a host of rigid dichotomies that affect the educational research act and educational practice: objective reality and subjective experience, fact and imagination, truth and opinion, neutrality and partisanship, logic and emotion, secular and sacred, and public and private. The cause-effect linearity of modernist positivism, with its emphasis on decontextualized problem solving, sets the agenda for what we consider important about educational process...A postmodern mode of analysis assumes that the world is complex, characterized by a web-like configuration of interacting forces. Scientists, like everyone else, are inside, not outside, the web...the knower and the known are inseparable--they are both a part of the web of reality...We must all confess our subjectivity; we must recognize our limited vantage point. To recognize how our particular view of the web shapes our conception of educational reality, we need to understand our historicity. (pp. 118-119)

To illustrate the above concept I shall briefly focus on Frank Lloyd Wright, an architect who is accepted as personifying the classic modern age, and a postmodern architect, Frank Gehry.

Modernism and Post-Modernism

Frank Lloyd Wright's 1936 Kaufman House, or "Falling Water", was considered technically revolutionary when it was constructed. The cantilevered decks, dependent on steel reinforced concrete, utilized the bed rock to jut out over a waterfall. Ridiculed as folly, it stands today as a testament to original thought. New processes are often mistrusted, and this was the case with Wright's revolutionary designs.

Wright designed all the furnishings and decorative elements. This comprehensive view of the building process can be paralleled to Jung's (1983) comprehensive view of human personality, shaped by thinking, feeling, sensation, and intuition.

The all-encompassing, assuredness of purpose evident in the Kaufman House is one of the hall marks of the modern age. Toronto's Don Mills, North America's first integrated residential development, with everything within easy reach of the automobile, is also a good example. This suburban dream, the 'new age' of convenience, was repeated throughout North America.

After the second world war there were the tentative steps away from the classic modern architectural dogma. With hind sight, we can label and place the diverse streams into coherent categories.

Multidirectional movements challenge the norms and accepted ways of the day. Out of these challenges grow the new styles and

directions, however, that which is controversial is not necessarily the new direction of tomorrow, often it is only a meander. Thus, in our "present time" we can only estimate the "known truths" and these truths can only be judged in relation to our histories and our own understandings (Jarvis, 1992).

In my opinion, this is similar to what Gadamer (1986) is saying in regards to the interpretation of text and the hermeneutic circle which he attributes to Heidegger's hermeneutic thinking when he says:

All correct interpretations must be on guard against arbitrary fancies and the limitations imposed by imperceptible habits of thought and direct its gaze 'on the things themselves'...it is necessary to keep one's gaze fixed on the thing throughout all the distractions that the interpreter will constantly experience in the process and which originate in himself.

(p. 236)

In Santa Monica, California, Frank Gehry has been deconstructing his home, room by room, beam by beam, element by element, and has thus reworked it. The 1940s timber frame original is reconstructed into a disjunctured whole (Jarvis, 1992), that is new, but completely dependent on the old. Gehry utilizes materials that are utilitarian, materials not usually seen in the "finished" architectural unit, materials such as, chain-link fencing, ply-wood, corrugated galvanized metal to create new aesthetics.

The concept of the ready-to-use is not new, but his application of it is. Looking into one of Gehry's rooms one is filled with nostalgia and the harsh contrasts of materials. It creates a whole

new body of aesthetics, which for some, at first sight, are jarring. As a friend of mine pointed out, "I wouldn't want to live in that place, it looks unfinished." In my view this comment correctly summarized the point, the concept of finished is itself false.

The change that is reflected in the deconstructed rooms is the pluralism of our time. What is at first glance chaos, becomes the new order or style, in turn the benchmark for the next generations.

Gerhy's historicity, that is his growing up in, and being educated by, the modernist movement, have shaped his vision and enabled him to create "new" works.

New Beginnings

As we discuss the postmodern era, we can speculate that it is ending. As I write, the next is taking hold, but due to our proximity to it we can not "see" it. "Time" shows us where we are in the "now." We assimilate the past into the present and formulate the future. The paradox lies in the existential "now." As Jarvis (1992) said, "one of the paradox's of learning becomes apparent: without learning, little or no change could take place; when change does occur, learning has to follow" (p. 25), and as Gadamer (1986) puts it:

This description is, of course, a rough abbreviation of the whole. The process that Heidegger describes is that every revision of the fore-project is capable of projecting before itself a new project of meaning, that rival projects can emerge side by side until it becomes clearer what the unity of meaning is, that interpretation begins with fore-conceptions that are replaced by more suitable ones. This constant process

of new projection is the movement of understanding and interpretation. (p. 236)

Research Methods

I shall retrace my steps as a researcher so that the reader may understand the process. I chose to conduct research within the art college at which I work. This proved to be convenient and allowed me to choose participants with many years of experience.

I kept field notes which have helped in the recreation of the "researcher's story" which is to follow. I utilized the suggestions of Schatzman and Strauss (1973). I broke the entries up into "nuggets" of information and coded them with, MN, TN, and ON, (methodological notes, theoretical notes, and observational notes). I made entries on one side of the page only, so that there was ample room for writing further notes at later dates. Once I acquired the necessary fluency at using the abbreviations and got used to "nuggets of information," I found this system useful. It allowed for quick reference and ample room for further notes.

Many of my assumptions proved to be inadequate, however, there is no better way to learn than experientially. To quote Peter Jarvis (1992), "The process of learning is located at the interface of people's biography and the sociocultural milieu in which they live, for it is at this intersection that experiences occur" (p. 17).

It is at this point that a qualitative study works. That is, it is an ongoing learning, it is not preknown, there can be no preconceptions (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

This is the theory. Practice, as I discovered, is a different thing.

The nature of the in-depth interview is that it produces reams of data from a very small sample (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Le Compte & Preissle, 1993; Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Patton, 1990; Seidman, 1991).

I agree with Stout's (1995) description of the process, "as something like the 'slice of life' short story, which takes a wedge or a slice out of everyday events and sets it apart for closer scrutiny" (p. 171).

This is indeed what happens, this "slice of life" becomes so magnified that it takes on it's own life. It is to do with time, scale, and perceptions. The very elements that make up this "being becoming" (Young, 1985).

The Researcher's Story

The Beginning

To get a book and trace all the thoughts. Glaser (1978), grounded theory.

I've been collecting on bits of paper, now I have the book.

My job is finished and I have handed the contract over to my successor. Two days was all it took. At the end of second day I gave him the master key. I realized this was it. The master key is symbolic, taking it off the key ring and handing it over was the cut.

The Weight

I now realize how much it was weighing me down. How much I wanted out. It consumed me. I was finding it difficult to get to the "research."

I tidied the desk. I threw out papers I had collected over my 6 month contract; dealt with some loose ends, filed the papers that might be important, and left at 7 p.m.

I went home, my back hurt. I was tired, I felt the weight of the research. I had begun, but I had not "engaged," as my reading had told me I must, and my tacit knowledge of building sculpture concurred. I had supper, had a bath, and went to bed. "I'll go tomorrow, I'll go to OISE (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education) tomorrow. I'll write it (the letter to the participants) then." In bed my wife said, "I thought you were going to work on your paper tonight." "No," I said, "I'm too tired."

I Must Begin

I lay awake; by 11 p.m. I had gone over it a dozen times. It was now or never. In front of me the terror of the black void was eating at the pit of my stomach, gnawing, sometimes more, sometimes less, but always gnawing. Unless I got up, went to the office and started to work, it would remain. I knew this, it was time to engage.

I crawled out of bed and dressed. I realized I was awake, my hour in bed had rested me. I gathered the material, knowing what I want to do. That was easy, the hard part was to wait for the

autolectic process of engagement to take hold (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

I visualize Model Three (Cawelti, Rappaport, & Wood, 1992), I know I am at the large "V" shape, "falling in," the "artist pressing" and must reach "the artist is now not continuously bounded" (Appendix D).

By 11:10 I am at the office, I begin the process, more like a fight; engage, disengage; engage disengage, all night till 4:30 a.m. There was no 'flow' that night. At last I have it. Four packages for the four primary targets (my chosen participants).

The Process

I utilized the college's internal mail system to solicit my chosen participants. I composed a letter that outlined the project (Appendix B) and included the research journal article by Cawelti, Rappaport, and Wood (1992). I emphasized that my main interest in including the existing research was for the Model Three illustration (Appendix D), that it included. I encouraged them to review the model and included a second loose copy of it, so that we would have a common theme to discuss. I also included a brief explanation of my project (Appendix C).

The Selection

I selected two women and two men. Their art is strong, evocative and personally resolved. I was intrigued by the possibility of learning how these strengths would be reflected in their teaching.

They will be referred to as, "M," "N," "P," and "V." These letters

were selected for their poetic rhythm and have no other relationship to their authors other than to distinguish one from another. It was not until after I had done my selection that I realized that all four of them made three dimensional work. They are colleagues, but I knew none of them socially and one I had never met.

Timetable

My initial plan for the interview timetable proved unworkable. I had allotted a week to do four. As I will explain, I had much to learn about concept and reality. The books made it easy. I had done pilot studies, I knew what I was doing. In fact, it seemed to me that there was a close relationship between my understanding of qualitative research and the creative process that I engaged in when building a sculpture. I was excited to begin.

The Story Continues

On Wednesday, when I went to teach my evening class, I placed the four carefully prepared envelopes in their respective mail slots. I was proud of the product. It looked professional and I thought it was bound to get a quick response.

That evening when I returned home, I placed calls to the four potential participants' college voice mail, telling them that the envelopes were in their mail boxes. I briefly explained the project and what the envelopes comprised of; I indicated that I hoped to hear from them soon. I left three ways to get in touch with me.

Response

By the following Monday I had heard from "P", who had agreed to become a participant, and we had set up an interview for the next day at 2:00 p.m. This was hopeful, but certainly not what I had expected in terms of response. My sense of urgency and desire to commence with the "interview process" was heightening. I had to keep reassuring myself that all was OK in the universe, for I agree that "while it lasts consciousness works smoothly, action follows action seamlessly...in flow there is no need to reflect, because the action carries us forward as if by magic" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 54).

Interview #1

The college was chosen as a mutually convenient meeting place. I planed to get a tape recorder from audio visual (AV) and I had the recommended backup tape recorder.

Everything was under control. It was a warm day after the harshness of winter. However, my joy was short lived. My tape recorder was not functioning and AV was closed for lunch. I started to panic. This was not how I had envisioned my first interview. I thought I was prepared. I had done my practice runs as suggested, without mishap. But here I was, at the beginning of the real thing, looking foolish.

Luck was at hand. AV at the main campus was open and "P" was prepared to give me her car keys. I raced over, only to find the technician "out" and all equipment "signed" for the day. Three tape recorders were sitting in front of the slide librarian who was

"standing in" while the technician went for coffee. "Well can't I take out one of those?" I asked, "No, sorry," he answered, "you'll have to wait, he shouldn't be more than 5 minutes." Which was true, but I was getting more frantic by the minute.

"Oh yeah, I always have to sign those out for the day, otherwise my monitors would sign them out to anyone and I wouldn't have any" said the technician. I got a tape recorder on the condition it was back by 4 o'clock. I hurried back to the interview site, tested the machine, had my spare tape on hand and sat down to start interview #1 at 2:15 a.m., sweating, but only 15 minutes off schedule. Forty-five minutes later I had my first data in the bag.

The Process

Before leaving I went to check the internal mail slots. Two of the envelopes were still there, 6 days after I had placed them. "N" was coming in the next day, so I left his there. "V" had picked his up and I found out "M" was not utilizing the building for the week. I placed it in an external mailbox, I hoped she would get it faster.

I went to the library which is quiet, to write up my observations notes from the interview.

The lessons were being learned at the edge of reality, that point of engagement (Gadamer, 1986; Jarvis, 1992; Piele & Acton, 1994).

Review Lessons to Date

1. Book tape deck from AV and remember they go to lunch at 1:45 p.m.

2. Check the teaching schedules of chosen participants.
3. The possibility that the external mail system is more efficient.
4. Even though I had a clip-board for the interview, it was not at hand when I needed it.
5. I had taken off my watch, as is my habit, which meant I was not as conscious of time as I felt I ought to be.
6. Using C-60 tape had produced the result I wanted, namely it told me when I had done 30 minutes of the interview. This was good.

Transcripts

I had arranged for the transcriptions to be done by a neighbour, "who did that sort of thing." I had a rough guide of four to one, that is, 4 hours transcribing to 1 hour of taping. I took the tape over the next morning and arranged to pick up the disk (this would all be done on computer to facilitate my analysis) later that day.

I picked up 16 pages of digitalised and hard copy transcript, 24 hours later. I was on track. However, there was a problem, I had not heard from "M," "N," or "V."

Reassessment

I revised my plan which had called for all interviews to be done that week. I would have to utilize the telephone; I had used the voice mail system of the college, but this was proving to be inadequate. I mistakenly assumed, because I used it, others did too.

I rang "V" as he had removed his mail, however, he knew nothing about it, but he would look into it. No, he hadn't checked his voice mail and in fact, he never did. He may have filed my correspondence in his junk mail file. I could call him back. This was not looking good. My sense of purpose was deflating.

Telephones

I felt I could not ring the contacts until they had received the package. I felt they needed to know what I was talking about. Unfortunately, I have an aversion to phones, I often do not answer them and dislike talking on them. I have learnt to deal with this in business, but it can return, and it did. I was paralyzed for 2 days, waiting for contact, unable to take action; I had made the pitch, now I wanted the response.

I knew this wasn't going to work. The psychic call was not enough. I must make a move. I would see "N," who taught the class before mine, when I went into teach on Wednesday, one week from the initial placement. This assumption proved to be wrong, he was doing a project out of college that day, he had, however, taken the envelope. Continual reassessment was needed.

Notes on Progress

1. "N" had picked up the envelope, I could phone.
2. I had sent an envelope by mail to "M," I could phone on the weekend.
- 3 "V" was looking to see if he could locate the package.

It was not all bad. I put things back in perspective by reminding myself, that it was a week ago that I had placed the envelopes in the mail boxes and one transcript was done. "It is indeed, half full, not half empty," I reassured myself.

Interview #2

I made successful telephone contact with "N" on Thursday and we agreed to meet at his house on Saturday. I am "in the game," I thought (Gadamer (1986). That "N" was male after "P" being female, felt right, as did the fact that I was going to his home. I would gain a different perspective, more grist for the deep, rich data collection.

I arrived organized, having taken to heart the lessons learnt from interview #1. I set up the tape recorder and we began. Almost immediately "N" said, "why don't you use my tape deck, it will give you better sound." We proceeded to change over to his system, which included two hand held microphones.

The interview went well, and I left for OISE to write up my debriefing notes and continue the creativity research.

I delivered the tape for transcription and expected prompt service. I was heavily into the literature review and so happily allowed a few days for delivery. The few days turned into a week, once again I became nervous, a week's interview schedule was now nearing 3 weeks.

The Sound Quality Was Superior

The transcript was delivered with a report that the sound quality was 100% better, thanks to "N"s' recording knowledge. I agreed to making the remaining interviews of similar quality. This

necessitated a high quality, independently miked, tape deck. AV had one only and it was in constant demand.

"Twelve hundred dollars you've got there, may not be DAT (digital audio tape), but in it's day, it was the best you could buy," the technician said, as I walked out with it in my sling bag, the two mikes and accompanying cables were bigger than the deck.

On leaving the technician commented, "I'd get a better quality tape if I were you, it's sort of like putting a lawn mower engine in a Rolls Royce, it really doesn't make sense." "Oh thanks," I said. "You really don't think this tape is any good, eh?" (Playing the novice, although at the time I had bought it at the dollar store I had thought, "But I'm only taping voice, so what difference could it make, tape is tape.")

Once again a point of disjuncture (Jarvis, 1992). I thought back to my first two interviews. For "P" I had used a quality tape, but according to the technician, I had used tape that was guaranteed to break for "N."

I made a mental note to transfer it to a better quality tape.

I was now on track, "M" and "V" had agreed to be interviewed. I had them booked back-to-back over 2 days. I was getting better at this. The high quality tape deck was an empowerment.

Interview #3

On the way to interview "M," I stopped to buy some good quality audio tape. To my surprise one of my students was behind the counter, she said to her boss, "Hey that's my teacher give him a discount." I laughed, but sure enough I got a 10% discount. (Does

this mean she gets a 10% increase in mark? No, but it does change my feelings towards that student.)

"It pays to be nice," I tell myself.

I am organized for "M." We have agreed to meet at her house, and the female, male, female, progression has worked out well.

I am about 10 minutes early for the interview, just enough time to get nervous. "This is nuts," I tell myself, "why are you getting nervous?"

It seems to be part of the process. I also get nervous before teaching a class.

I know that "M" has been teaching all day. We are meeting at 6:00 p.m. at her house, I am worried she will be tired. I remind myself that this was her choice. Even though she didn't want to do the interview she had been persuaded. The initial contact letter, the jargon of the article, and the official looking document had not intrigued her as had been my intent, but rather it had the effect of making her dubious. She had agreed as a favor. "I would like to help you" she had said, "I just don't like 'studies'."

I enter "M"s' converted warehouse, with studio below and living quarters above. We sit at a central table rung with light. It is comfortable. I relax, realizing that it was going to be fine. "M"s' two dogs come to greet me, in fact, they had been the door bell when I arrived.

"The most intelligent dogs you'll meet," "M" says, "show Alex where you keep your toys." One of them goes over to a drawer, where it has a collection of rubber toys, and pulls out a boxing glove for me to throw.

I set up the tape recorder and we began with the dogs continual accompaniment. It was interesting because it created a counter point to the interview process.

I was invited to dinner after the taping, the conversation continued on similar topics which furthered the data collection. This helped me realize how extraordinary this process was. I had captured an hour of conversation on tape as data, to become text, manipulated and hardened, as opposed to the continuation that was left to memory and field notes.

Now The Expert

Needless to say by interview #4, I was a professional. I understood the equipment, had the controls and switches mastered, and I was confident.

I was back at the college for this last interview. Three weeks to the day, from when I had placed the envelopes in the respective box's. It felt like months. It felt far from that first mad rush to get a tape recorder, the scramble to make contact with the participant, and my worry of a negative response. Though "M" and "V" had voiced reluctance initially, they became willing participants.

The Transcriber

I received the last two transcripts in 3 days, my transcriber was also getting up to speed. He voiced real enjoyment in having been included in the project, as he found the content interesting. This was a boost to my moral. He wondered when the next lot were going to come in and was disappointed to find that the follow-up

was to be done without tape. The 100 pages of data generated by the 4 hours of tapes was enough to keep me in business.

It served the purpose as "qualitative researchers want those who are studied to speak for themselves" (Sherman & Webb, 1988, p. 5).

The progression fascinated me. Less than 4 hours of tape translated into over 22 hours of intensive transcription and 100 pages of text. The four to one ratio proved to be the high end of transcription service.

Some conversations are dense and fast, while others are light, with many pauses. The transcriber has different quality and quantity of words to input. The variations in speech, over a one hour tape, produced as much as six pages difference.

Transcriptions Sent Out

Four weeks to the day and I send out the first of the follow-up letters to the participants (Appendix E) and began the intense work of modifying the text into the four narrative stories that I had envisioned (Polkinghorne, 1995).

Once again my time frame proved unworkable. The natural workings of the hermeneutic process does not allow for anything other than the process to run its course.

I first marked the text for general patterns, looking for similarities between the four and trying to find common themes. There were some obvious ones to begin the process.

Being in "Flow"

Having hard data and no one but myself to worry about (having a very supportive wife who said, "you have to do what you have to do, go for it."), I set myself a routine that would offer me optimal flow experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). That is, long periods of uninterrupted time. "When do you get that?" you may well ask.

I set the schedule to be counter to everyone else's. The first few nights were hard, but I had worked up to it the week before. I was staying up later and later until by week 4, when I had the transcripts, I slipped into "all nighters," working straight through from around 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. I was then on duty to make my son's breakfast and send them off to school, as my wife heads to work at 7:00 a.m.

For 6 nights straight, I fought and struggled the text to the ground. There was a half-way point, where I thought I was crazy. It made no sense. Why was I doing this to myself? What was happening?

I cut and redrafted, over and over, as each run through came to an end it seemed to take on a new life. It would demand another cut, and another, rework--rework. The headings became tighter and tighter, groups of text fell into neater and neater units, they seemed to take on their own life. They became meaningful. I knew them all by their codes.

The Narrative Story Format

I chose to work the transcripts toward narrative story form based on my reading of Goodson (1995), Hatch and Wisniewski (1995), and Polkinghorne (1995). As Goodson said, "The new genres have the potential for advancing educational research in representing the lived experience of schooling" (p. 89). He confronted some of the potential problems of a "human story" saturated media, and warned that we must be vigilant to keep the highest standards possible. Tavalin's (1995) article "Context for Creativity: Listening to Voices, Allowing a Pause," was also instrumental in assuring me of the value and methodological soundness of this approach.

A Midpoint Visual

There was a midpoint, when working on one of the stories, that I saw it in visual form.

I saw a gentle upward curving arch. The top of the arch held by the description of the north. It then curved down to rest with the response to the article and epilogue.

This visual story line gave me the queue for the others. I had been fighting to find an order, a rhythm that made sense. They seemed so disjointed, I wanted a unified flow.

I realized that two of the stories were missing the tops of their curves. They had the supports on either side, but there was no height to them. I knew that there were data that had been cut, early in the process, as not important. It became clear that I needed to

return to the data and retrieve the necessary bits. These were necessary to fill the profiles of the stories to the same height, to give them the lift. It would give texture, complete the rhythm needed, to read them as story.

With the visual I could work the elements more easily. But I could not get the visual till I had worked the text sufficiently to "know" it. This is the "catch 22" of the process.

Fine tuning came in working each grouping of words. To strive for complete units of meaning and to have these connect to each other in a manner that made sense, was what I endeavoring to accomplish. This was difficult because I kept wanting each story to be like another one, and vice versa. I had to remind myself that the similarities should not be forced, to allow those that were naturally there to rise to the surface.

When I teach, I talk of the internal logic of a work, I strove for this in the texts.

The final movement was the distillation of each story into a poem of headings that reflected their essence. Ten lines, depicted 10 pages, so tight were the groupings.

The Experience

It was an amazing experience. I believe that this was the emerging design. Glaser's (1978) grounded theory bore fruit. Persistence paid off. The four narrative stories in Chapter 4 are unique to themselves, they could not exist without the stealing of a

moment of time. I believe that Gadamer's (1986) notion of the horizon and the text embodying its own meaning, held me to it.

Truth and Method

At the half way point, when I could see no way out, I literally fell on Gadamer (1986). His clarity of vision, his ability to say something with simple words which seems to have a vastness to it that is breathtaking, convinced me that there was an end, to continue the struggle.

The following quote is an example of the power I found in his words, it talked to a deep sense of knowing, that each time I read it is renewed. It happens with the words, it is this that told me that the exercise of trying to work my pages of interview transcript into a meaningful, for me, text, has value. Maybe it lies behind the words that I have now assimilated into my being.

We saw that to understand a text always means to apply it to ourselves and to know that, even if it must always be understood in different ways, it is still the same text presenting itself to us in these different ways. That the claim to truth of every interpretation is not in the least relativised is seen from the fact that all interpretation is essentially linguistic. The linguistic explicitness that the process of understanding gains through interpretation does not create a second sense apart from that which is understood and interpreted. The interpretative concepts are not, as such, thematic in understanding. Rather, it is their nature to disappear behind what they bring, in interpretation, into

speech. Paradoxically, an interpretation is right when it is capable of disappearing in this way. And yet it is true at the same time that it must be expressed as something that is intended to disappear. The possibility of understanding is dependent on the possibility of this kind of mediating interpretation (Gadamer, 1986, p. 359).

Send off the Narrative Stories

I sent off the narrative stories to the participants asking for their feedback and saying that I would be calling to discuss their ideas for changes or modifications (Appendix F).

All of the participants had changes to make, from minor spelling of key words, to entire rewrites of sections of text that were felt to be "muddy" or "not making sense."

I met with the participants to go over their intended changes and to discuss the process in general. They all felt comfortable with the overall content and representation of their story. In my opinion, that each story was accepted as a valid reflection of the individual, as he or she read it, was the passing test. "Yes it was interesting," "It organized my thoughts more than I do myself." "It's useful to have this kind of organization," were common responses.

The final changes were made to the text and a letter calling for closure (Appendix G) was sent to each participant. As all participants had agreed to share their "stories" with one another, these were included with this letter.

The Participants

That the narrative stories now exist in text form is a testament to the participants. Their words have fed me and their continued dialogue with the text as I sent updates was a testament to perseverance.

The words have the collected wisdom of over 90 years of practice behind them. They are the words of professionals who gave their time freely. I am grateful for this honor.

I worked the text to a place that I believe represents what they said. It took time before I saw the subtle differences between the "you," "I," "they" and so forth, how these have multiple meanings, how "you" can be "I." The tapes and the context of the interview helped to determine which was being inferred.

I worked hard at making the text a unified whole that could be read as such, so that each section would have its own character. I worked with the original text, reworking, but endeavoring to keep the 'feel' of the individual. I changed words, but only where I felt it was in the best interest of the text to do so.

When I reached the point of closure of the hermeneutic circle, as it wound down to a climactic finish, where I was suddenly changing all the headings from the formal to more personalized outcrops from the text, I felt sure it was right. It was the final step that was going to pull each piece into a whole.

I realize that the process is not complete, but there comes a time in all circles when the tail must declare itself.

Summary

In this chapter I have outlined the methodology that was used to explore the creative process of the working artist/teacher employed by an art college. It chronologically described the research process from the selection of the participants, to the data collection and recording procedures, through to the analysis methods.

The largest component of this chapter was a description of the "researcher's story." This method was chosen as it relates to the "participant's stories" in the following chapter (Emihovich, 1995; Polkinghorne, 1995) .

This description served several purposes. Above all it enabled the reader to have a full understanding of the procedures undertaken and thus, addressed the issue of transferability or generalizability, that is, how does what is written affect the reader's existing knowledge (Bogden & Biklen, 1992).

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter relates the four participants' stories as compiled from extensive work on the transcripts. As described in Chapter 3, I drew inspiration from Gadamer (1986) and engaged the hermeneutic circle as methodology. "A person who is trying to understand a text is always performing an act of projecting" (p. 236).

Each transcript went through countless rewrites. As each rewrite drew to a close, it in turn opened up the next round, for by the time I had reached the end of one, I understood more about the overall content of the data. This was both exciting and frustrating, as it appeared the process had no end. However, it did reach a point where it felt "right" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Glaser, 1978; Patton, 1990; Seidman, 1991).

The process felt akin to what Stout (1995) referred to when discussing "organic art criticism," which asks that the writer, ...draw new parallels, and to take things a little further than before, the focus changes from finding the answer to making meaning...the process of interpretation as generative and open-ended, with no set answers and no definitively established solutions...that knowledge and understanding of art are always in the state of flux and growth. (p. 177)

I engaged the participants in the process of creating their stories, by keeping them informed of the progression, and asking for their input at various stages. I attempted what O'Connor and Wolfe

(1991) described as coinquiry, which states that the challenge is to create conditions of openness and a willingness to trust one another, so that the participants join the researcher in the process. Each participant was chosen for their long term commitment to teaching and their extensive exhibiting and professional contribution to the arts in Canada.

P's Story

P has been teaching since 1977, and part-time at the college since 1987, and full-time since 1990, she is 59 years old.

Teaching is a fountain of youth.

I think it's conducive to remaining mentally malleable.

My Role as an Artist/Teacher

I love doing experimental things, I have far less barriers now, than I had--let's say--even 10 years ago, because I figure I've got nothing to lose. If I don't do it now, I'll never do it.

I have to be really careful that I don't try to make the students into another version of me. I have my own thrust...and I'm my own best yardstick. But on the other hand, it's a very fine line. I always have to keep guarding against going over that line by not saying, "Well, because I don't like it!" or "Because I don't think it's valid!" I have to stay in tune with my perception.

It was all men making beds and dressers.

In a sense, I've always been loath to call what I do an art form, because I use traditional woodworking tools and it doesn't really fit into any category. I put things together to create an effect, or a quality, that communicates something. Kind of like building a stairway to the stars and the stars are always further and further and further away.

I remember one time when I was taking a carpentry course, and it was all men making beds and dressers and tables and chairs, and I was using conventional tools to create this huge animal. One of the guys came to me and said, "Hmm...what are you making this for?" and I said "Oh, just for fun." "Must be nice to be able to have fun." he said and I replied, "You could too!"

You don't have to hate what you're doing! But somehow the work ethic tends to say that art--unless it's functional--is not valid.

My Teaching Methods

I always try to give students very open assignments, which they object to, particularly in first year. They want rules and regulations. The one directive I give them, is; I'll make the rules. They can follow them and get an average mark; or they can break the rules and be rewarded for having explored further than the rules would indicate. The only reason I ever give rules is because they're asking for them. The rules provide a safety net.

Beginning? Are you kidding? I just finished!

I like the Foundation Department. Because, I'm getting the raw material, people who are going in many directions. It puts a much more generalist thrust on what I'm trying to get across, so I can cover a lot of the areas, which helps my own research.

Pointing out that every goal achieved is a new starting point is hard to get across to them because they've struggled to reach that goal. They just want to lie back and say, "I've done it." Sometimes it's hard to say, "Oh wow, I'm at a new beginning." Beginning? Are you kidding? I just finished!

There are two sides to it, and they're equal and opposite. On the one hand, I have to push them beyond their limits, and on the other hand, I have to keep them from going off the deep end. My role is to stimulate and encourage them, pointing out the possibilities they have touched on.

I've had students whom I've let go totally their own way, and they've always come out with wonderful stuff. I had them out on a pole; they were plugged in but still working within their own special vision. The structure of the class allowed for this freedom, it was like a crowd acting and moving in unison. Maybe that chemistry is what worked so well.

There are limits.

Pushing them beyond their limits is always a dicey thing. I'm dealing with students who are fragile in many ways; I've had some who wound up in an institution because they just couldn't take the pressure.

My Students

He's doing the minimum amount of work.

I've got a student whom I think is brilliant; he's doing the minimum amount of work and he tends, from a subtle point of view, to be revolutionary in his thinking. I think he's exceptionally talented and could push it further; he wants to argue with me-- which I enjoy. I don't want him to stop there. There's a danger of him winning a battle but losing the war--because he's not continuing the process of digging his heels in and crashing through the woods with a machete.

Apparently other teachers failed him.

I had a student one year who argued with me the whole year. At the end of the year, when everyone had their interviews, he slunk in and I said, "You know you were a real challenge in the class," he said "Yeah, I know, I pissed a lot of teachers off and they're making me pay for it." I gave him his mark, a good mark, and he said, "Oh, I thought you'd give me a really bad mark." I said, "You were a challenge, and being a challenge is very creative; you were challenging everything I gave you, you worked in your own way, and you came up with wonderful work." Apparently other teachers failed him.

He liked the shape.

I had a student last year who was absolutely super, he went through the woodshop and picked up little pieces of wood other people had thrown out. He liked the shape and he put all these things together and came up with wonderful pieces. Every week he would come in with a whole new set of plans that had evolved from the previous week's meanderings. The whole process he went through was exciting, and although no specific thing was achieved, the research and analysis that he did gave him the feeling that anything is possible, not out of bounds. He'd taken steps toward creating a voice for himself.

Security in Church

Safe parameters. Well, I always felt I didn't want to live in a house, so I live in a church.

Everything about my existence--which I always thought was conservative--people look at and say, "This is crazy. Why would you do this?" "Why would anyone choose to live in a church?" and on the other hand, they say, "How do you do that?" and "What a stroke of luck! How did you manage this?" or "Did somebody give it to you?"

One day I found it, and I decided I had to have it, and fortunately I had just enough money to pay for it. It was almost as an afterthought that I started to figure out how I ended up there.

It provides a venue which is so wonderful. I've got 30-foot ceilings and Gothic windows that are magnificent. The property is wonderful. The village is wonderful.

Interestingly enough, even though villages have very conservative people, they love having somebody who lives in a church and they love having artists around. My next door neighbour is a sculptor, it's a good setting; there are a lot of other artists in the area.

There are quite a few city dropouts: engineers, teachers, and people who are professionals, who are a little more sophisticated, and with whom I can have conversations.

I couldn't understand it.

At 9 years old, both my kids were working on some books with me; I had 25 artists doing the illustrations. And my kids did all the children's work. When the adults came in with their work, my kids started to fight it: they didn't want to do this, they couldn't do it. I think they thought that their work didn't have validity when viewed from a child's perspective of the adult world, because the adult artists could draw in an adult way. It was fascinating, and I couldn't understand it...

I think we do transfer our visions to our kids.

Children can carry on where the parents left off.

I was surprised when both my kids originally chose academics, one is floating right now, but the other one has definitely chosen to go into film.

I take vicarious pleasure in my children's creative work.

One of my daughters is doing exquisite abstract films, where she's using metaphors for human behavior. Right now, she's working on a film about hypothermia, as a metaphor for alienation.

She did a film last year on the effects of rape, the loss of self-worth, and the reacquainting of the victim with herself, by doing for herself the things she would like to have done, instead of being damaged. It was totally abstract; no one, unless they had the script, would have know what it was about. It was absolutely beautiful. She used interesting filters and integrated the sound so that it and the visuals became one.

She had never taken a photograph in her life...went out and took 600 photographs in one weekend, put them together in a photo essay, and got into film; and I think there were about 1,300 students applying. Only 60 got in, and she was one of the 60. In the program that she wanted to get into this year, they only accepted 13, and she was one of those chosen.

I think that a lot of what she did was based on things that I do. I think we do transfer our visions to our kids, even though they may take a totally different route.

My Teachers

My fears.

I think one of my worst fears is becoming rigid and not being able to open doors, not even wanting to.

I'm afraid of falling into the rigidity of my background. I grew up in a punitive, conservative Catholic, noncreative family. I think

part of the source of always needing an escape route, always knowing that those doors are open, always knowing that the boundaries are soft, is in part a terror of, it's not just a fear, it's real terror of becoming conservative.

I think the thing that I am fearful of is that I may corral myself by building too many fences too high, and not be able to go beyond them and this would be restrictive unless I can insure that the boundaries are soft.

Those I meet.

I've met many people who have been renegades and done absolutely outlandish, wonderful, iconoclastic things in their lives. But later in their life--and I'm very close to my late life--they become reactionary; and they resent young people who do things that are off the wall. They hate anyone who doesn't follow the rules. If somebody breaks the rules and succeeds, how dare they!

My students.

I found that what I do with the students feeds into my work. The students have stimulated a lot of the things I have done, like the three-dimensional work, I did it first with students and then developed it, and jumped a few gaps.

I start out with the project because I think it would be interesting from their point of view. Then I see that they're carrying it up to a point, and I would like to carry it further, so I might take some of the directives that I've given them and develop

them from my own point of view, and move from one size to a larger size.

My kids.

Teaching has opened so many doors. Not only that, my own kids are the age of my students. And so I find that there's always an opening there. It's kind of like having my kids who are at the heart of the matter and all of these other kids who validate their point of view.

I can talk with my kids, I can talk with my students; there's that counterbalance between them, the perceptions--the youthful perceptions that they come up with, the things that they share, I remain in touch with.

Creativity

How many of us attach being in the right place, at the right time, to something that we've created? Is it that we've got an eye that can spot something more than other people can, and use it as a starting point?

I really don't like to plan.

Some people can plan effectively and still be creative. I find if I plan too thoroughly, I feel like I'm not being creative, because I'm not allowing this flexibility, this growth, to happen at source.

I make plans which seem pretty tight, but I absolutely refuse to be bound by, or follow them.

Quite a few years ago I had a Canada Council grant; I traveled for a year. I planned a strict itinerary with tight agendas that I had to follow. I missed a whole lot. I've learnt to be conscious of this when I'm trying to do something creative. If I plan it too carefully, I may not have left all of the vents open, to allow the fresh air--the fresh ideas to come in; and although I may not use them specifically, they're fueling the fire of my creation, whatever it may be.

My more pragmatic friends tend to get depressed with the random way I approach things. But for me, it works much better if I don't close doors. I tell this to my students--"if you close one door, you close 12; and each of those has 12 more doors."

I think leaving those doors open, and knowing that they are always there, and knowing that I can always push these boundaries beyond where they are now--that they're flexible, and that those doors are always open, is a security.

Develop that webbing.

Creative people are peripheral people; they're very rarely mainstream. Being on the periphery sometimes causes them to feel that they're out of it, they may drift in and out and draw on the mainstream but they will always be peripheral people. That's what creates their uniqueness! In order to survive, creative people have to develop that webbing that's going to shore them up and keep them on an even footing.

I think its about realizing that the areas within which I'm working are finite, but then again they could go on forever. They could be infinite--or somewhere in between. I've got a lifetime,

really--I might come back to something in 10 years and it'll blossom. Or I might come back to it in 10 days and it'll blossom.

Reaction to Model Three

I like the visual language.

I read the blurb about the artists coming up with these things, but I'm not sure I understand how this was arrived at.

Working myself into a corner.

I've always used the analogy of working myself into a corner, of having then to break through it. The vista then opens up and I have this terrific panorama. I feel that there's no tomorrow, I can continue and continue and then slowly I find myself back in another corner.

I've often tried to analyze the creative process, and thought, it's really difficult to put it in perspective. It's like trying to understand something that I've experienced, but not really looked at the rationale behind it.

Set it up with soft boundaries.

There's this too, I'm pushing and pushing and pushing--and knowing that there's something there that I really need to get deeply into, but I have to set it up with soft boundaries.

I find that I have to be constantly prodding, testing, and questioning myself, searching my soul--both on moral grounds and on practical grounds.

There's this constant juggling back and forth between ways of working, and materials I work with, not locking myself into ones that I'll get bored with. On the other hand, do I get bored too fast? Do I jump out of something because I've had a setback?--and if I drop it and move into another area will I return to it? I noticed in Model Three, they talked about letting things go and working on something altogether different, and then coming back to it. I'm always afraid that if I leave it, based on a very strong experience, that I may never come back to it.

I think too much self-knowledge is dangerous. What I'm worried about is knowing myself so well that I would become sclerotic.

Epilogue

It's like confusing the edges of my rut with the horizon, I never really know the difference. I think I'm doing something that's really creative but it's because I've never looked beyond.

N's Story

N has been teaching at the college since 1970, he is 64 years old.

I think making art is a process towards liberation.

My Role as an Artist/Teacher

When I teach, I try to create projects or assignments that are somewhat focused around my own experience.

While I make a work of art, I experience certain things. I think some of it is exciting, and some of it is valuable in terms of perception. With this in mind, I try to design assignments which I think will allow the students to perceive something new--whatever it might be.

If I get an inspiration for a piece of music or for a sculpture, and I say Eureka! I got it! and proceed from there. I use the same process for teaching. Or why bother? Might as well do something else. It's been my practice, that whenever I get these flashes--whether they're intuitive, or intellectual--that I immediately try to fashion them, to present to students.

How to get through this life.

It has something to do with survival. I'm talking about the ordinary, struggling artists, trying to find out where the hell they are in terms of this cosmos, and how to get through this life in the most meaningful manner. Without bullshit.

Sometimes I wake up in the middle of the night and I go, Oh shit, I think that was bullshit--what I've been telling my students for the last month. I think there's some degree of courage in being able to go back to class and say, "Hey, let's take another look at this." That's an honest way to do it.

But it's not how it works, you're being paid to teach them something, and it's very difficult to go back and say, forget it! Forget everything I ever said in the past 2 months. But if the dialogue is sincere then you can do that. That's freedom. But I think that kind of freedom is very difficult to follow under institutional shackles.

When I talk about waking up in the middle of the night, and going Jeezus, it's bullshit--I'm fortunate, in that I can get up in the morning and assess the whole thing, and either get rid of it, or modify it, to bring it honestly back on track.

It's to do with growth.

I think the word new has to be looked at carefully. It's a most important word. It has nothing to do with "new," as used in our society, which is misunderstood because it's tacked onto commercialism. It has to do with growth, with changes in consciousness; I think it has everything to do with perception and the changing of perception. New perception. New ways of seeing. New ways of thinking.

My Teaching Methods

My whole goal in teaching art, is to allow the students to create their own styles, create their own techniques, and figure out what it is they want to say.

Why go to art school?

Going to art school should be focused on new ways of seeing, new perception, it's about new ways of thinking. And in order to establish that kind of pattern...the words are: Investigate. Explore. Experiment.

It has to start in Foundation. The college can't say, "In Foundation we're going give them the basic traditional techniques, and the rest of the school can take it from there." The student has to start investigating, exploring, and experimenting at the very beginning, because how else are they going to learn?

Get free through the art process.

Those assignments that I think are particularly good, I will repeat next year and the next year--maybe for about 3 years or 4 years; at which point I have to reevaluate, to see if I think it's still a good idea.

Sometimes what I do with an assignment, is to look at it from a different point of view, so that I'm not thinking in linear terms.

One project that I always used to give was make a new tool for drawing, or make a new tool to make art. Make a new tool to get free through the art process.

A lot of projects get pushed out because new ones come in. I make new problems and new assignments, so it's a process where the old assignments get knocked over the cliff, so to speak.

Make various noises.

I always get my sound exploration students to make mouth sounds, which many find extremely difficult. I walk in and I say, "Give me a sound," some make various noises but some of them can't do it. It then becomes a challenge of how, exactly, do you bring that out in students? I think it would be terrific if I said to them, "Give me a sound," and somebody makes a sound, and then I would say, "Okay, go and make something that approximates that sound."

That would be a great project. Whether it's made out of wood or a motor, I don't care. But approximate that kind of sound.

Many of these students also take video production, so I often say, "Okay, if you're making a video, that's fine, but what about sound?" They learn how to use the machines, to edit and how to put together a concept or an idea. But what are they going use for background sound? Or what are they going use for integrated sound? Normally they go and lift a piece of music from somewhere. That's the standard kind of procedure as far as I can see. So, I say, "You don't have to use music, you can make your own sounds." My students use sound in their video as opposed to music and that's encouraging. That's great!

They clutch an idea.

I think the most critical thing, and probably one of the most difficult to teach, is to try to explain the principle of liberation. How to be free, how to get free of everything that keeps you back. Most students find this extremely difficult.

It's very hard once they clutch an idea, they feel bound to work it through, regardless of whether it's good or not. I encourage them to abandon it, even if there's only a week left to finish the project. I say it's more important to throw it out and go to another idea. If they're willing to do that, then I will accommodate them.

My Students

Students tend to be more conservative today.

They don't know what art is. They don't know what design is. If you ask them, they'll hum and haw, because they haven't looked into it. And nobody's given them the opportunity to look into it.

My experience has always been that there are a handful of students who get it. And they're off and running. And then there are students who don't get it. As far as I'm concerned, that is where the really hard and most challenging aspect of teaching comes in. That is, to sit down with those students who don't get it and try to show them how.

They should leave.

Good students, or the students with vitality don't even need to be at school, they can teach themselves. I think that if they get it--whether it's in Foundation year, or second year, or third year--they

should leave. Why stay? Although it may be useful for defending their position in terms of history. So that they can say, "Here I am at this point of time, and my work is the result of a historical line of expression and here I am continuing the process, which is very legitimate.

There are limits.

Sometimes there are problems that students have that I'm not capable of confronting: psychological problems or problems that were created in the formative years. There is no way I can deal with that.

Their goals are clearly established.

I prefer teaching more mature students: they're receptive, they're focused, their goals are clearly established. I really like talking to them.

It's a big deal to change in midstream; to give up whatever they've been doing, many mature students have systematically saved up money to go to art school. That's very courageous.

Having made the decision to become an artist, they are genuinely interested in discussing process. I talk to them about my personal approach--how I access my ideas and develop them, what are my sources of inspiration and influences, how I confront doubt and insecurities. I encourage them to observe and develop their own process.

My Classroom

Twelve to 15 students is a perfect number. At least I can see them.

Sneak out through the back door.

One of the problems I have with a group of 30 is sneaking out. I don't care. That's their shit, I let them go. I don't say, "Hey, it's not time to go yet." They're not kids, they're adults: might as well treat them that way.

On the other hand, if I have a group of 15 and I establish dialogue, a student who wants to, or needs to leave early, will come up to me and say, "Hey, I'd really like to leave early today, because blah-blah-blah," which is a lot better than trying to sneak out through the back door.

So I establish a very positive relationship when the numbers are smaller. I have dialogues, I have discussions, I have exchanges of experiences, it might be about politics or destruction, it might not be about art. It might be about something else, but its a positive relationship.

A kind of edginess.

The group dynamic comes and goes. If I'm fortunate, I'll get a group that is really charged, and has a very positive and open outlook. I can have discussions with them; I can become friends with them. But then with other groups, the dynamic just isn't there, the energy isn't there; in fact, what is there is a kind of edginess, a

defensiveness; they don't know what's expected of them, what they're doing, and they don't know how to break through it.

My Experience of an Upper-Year Program

Its a program which I think is more successful than others at the college. There is a very clear understanding of how the process is to move. Post-modern, theoretical, post-post-modern or whatever. There's a definite party line which students tend to adhere to. The confrontation between whatever are the issues or philosophies, is the party line.

The problems with dogma.

However, one of the problems is that the students are drawn towards what is currently mainstream and they don't want to deviate from that. They don't feel comfortable in deviating from that, which is okay if they want to do that, but they don't have to.

The really hard part is for students to extricate themselves from that. They don't realize they can make work in this manner or in another, it doesn't matter if someone says, "That has nothing to do with it, no relevance to the historical flow," or "Your stuff looks like something from 20 years ago."

Hey, who cares? Who cares, as long as they're working within their own process and they're discovering something they never knew about themselves.

Spiritual Speculation

I'm 64--I'm going to be 64 this year, so I go, Jesus, man, it's passed in a snap. My whole life has been [snaps his fingers] passing in a snap. I'm going to be dead as quick as that, right? So I go, okay, what does that mean? What's happening? I've never really thought too much about God and what that means; I'm not really sure what that means. But I think it's interesting to give it some thought. The kind of thing that gets to me is when the author Harry Partch talks about taking a flip and you jump into the mouth of God and you're tasted.

Taking a flip.

I think that's great, whatever that means, it just feels good to me. And so I think about that, and I think about how I'm going to pass through: is it going to be a panic? Or is it going to be done with some courage, or is it going to be done through some kind of realization? This is okay, it's a process, a move from one side to the other.

What does it have to do with a lot of things? What does it have to do with being honest? Maybe a lot. What does it have to do with telling somebody that you love them, which a lot of people find very difficult?

Confrontations of truth, to the best of your ability: all of those things seem to be important in order to pass through with ease, from one side to the other and maybe it has to do with God. Maybe it doesn't have anything to do with God, I don't know. It's a concept, right?

It's the same as making something.

If this is what I'm going through at the age of 64 and I'm still teaching, it would be great for me to say to my students, "Hey, I've been thinking about this. Want to talk about it?" Same thing, you know, it's the same as making something.

I don't know what the student would say. I don't know whether they're mature enough. On the other hand they might find it really interesting. With mature students, I could take it much further.

I think it's this kind of confrontation that's important and has everything to do with art.

My Teachers

I forget certain things, or I forget certain procedures, or I forget to look at something from another point of view, and a student reminds me of that, and I go, "Oh yea, I forgot about that. I must remember that." Sure, that happens, it's about recognition.

Creativity

[N opens a book] Harry Parch (1974) is an American renegade composer. He made up his own scale. A lot of what he says in the beginning is very much about creativity. For instance, he said, "Rules and standards become meaningless once the simple truth is faced. Let us give to nuts and bolts the standardization of thread that we have come to expect. But let us give to music--magic, to man--magic" (p. xii).

[He continues to quote]

On the wall of the projection room of a company specializing in children's films are inscriptions of appreciation. One of these touched me in an extraordinary way. Along with a thank-you were the following words painted, illuminated, by the child author:

Once upon a time
There was a little boy
And he went outside. (p. xiii)

I'll just do a bit of this, because it is meaningful to me. In the preface he says,

Perhaps the most hallowed of traditions among artists of creative vigor is this: traditions in the creative arts are per se suspect. For they exist on the patrimony of standardization, which means degeneration. They dominate because they are to the interest of some group that has the power to perpetuate them, and they cease to dominate when some equally powerful group undertakes to bend them to a new pattern. It is not difficult for alert students to acquire the traditional techniques. Under the pressure of study these are unconsciously and all too easily absorbed. The extent to which an individual can resist being blindly led by tradition is a good measure of his vitality. (p. xv)

It's similar. Really it's the same thing.

Oh yeah, I was going to look for something here that was, I thought, pertinent. [Pauses to look for another passage in Harry Partch]

Oliver Evans, the poet, says 'It is not that we are misunderstood, but that we are understood too well.' Having been understood too well, it is very natural that we want to go away--run away! Arthur Carson, who was about 17 when I knew him in 1952, carries the idea to its ultimate:

Go away run away
 Over the cloud
 And over the cliff.
 And jump into the mouth of god
 And be tasted
 And the whole thing is over
 When you flip through the air. (p. xii)

Students need to flip through the air and be tasted by God.

Response to Model Three

This is interesting. Visible, nonvisible. So this is the nonvisible part. I tend to look at it more this way: a vertical versus a horizontal view. For some reason I'm more oriented this way. Yeah. It's the same thing vertical or horizontal. Visible, nonvisible, the thing is to constantly move towards the nonvisible.

Sequential, nonsequential, yeah. Accepting failure, yeah. Reentry. Yes, I would prefer to be staying on that side, I would, I really would. If you stay on that side, you probably wouldn't be making any art. I think you would stop making art. But you can't stay on that side. Well, yes you can; I don't know--I think art is a tool. I think it's a tool to get to the other side.

To be tasted by God.

I think you move towards liberation. I think making art is a process toward that, but then once you find out what it is--once you're free--then I don't think you would need to make art anymore. I don't know--but that's the way it looks to me.

To be tasted by God is a big question, and again, it has to do with the line illustrated in Model Three. Art is a tool to go to the other side which is the unknown, and whether I express it specifically or not, maybe it has to do with God; and maybe it has to do with liberation. I don't know yet. Maybe I won't know until the day I drop off. But that's okay, as long as I work towards getting it right.

Epilogue

When I look at things such as nature, I marvel at the complexity and the intricacy, the variety, and the beauty of the whole thing and I say, "How can there not be a God or a Creator?"

M's Story

M has been teaching parttime at the college since 1975, and full-time since 1989, she is 51 years old.

Theory is after the fact.

My Role as an Artist/Teacher

I try to be an honest teacher. I mean, I think it's difficult because I have an image: I'm of a certain generation, I have a reputation amongst the students, and a reputation as an artist or a professional. They put all of that stuff into whatever order is appropriate for them.

I try to be really up front, and I think that sometimes that is misconstrued. I say I care about what I do, it's really important to me. And as a result of that, I want them to care too, and I don't want anything less than the best work that they can produce. I know this is first year, I know that some of these things are exercises, but there is value in them. There's room within the exercises to gain something personal and that's what I want them to search for.

We should support the student.

I decided I'd really like to be involved with first year students; and I still like them.

I think that it's a very critical time because they do have preconceived notions, they're there because somebody told them that they were good at art, or that they really draw album covers well;

or...somebody buys somebody's ridiculous paintings, y'know--clichés or whatever, and so here they are at art school because they've gotten the support.

We should learn from that. People have supported them, they feel that they have an ability, that they have a talent, that they can succeed. There is the dangerous part of that too, they think that they're opting for a lifestyle, they're there "to express themselves." They think it's about gratification, so I have to discourage that, but at the same time...open up a whole realm of other possibilities, discipline and hard work, the notion that it's about doubt and probing areas that one would rather leave untouched.

It depends on their agenda.

I say these things but I know that it's not always accepted in the way that I intend it to be. They think, she's a bitch or whatever, depending on their own agenda or reason for being there. And that's fair. It's possible I might come across as being too intense or saying something that's misinterpreted.

It does happen that I get charged by a class, but sometimes I go and I'm dreading it, and it's frightening.

I think it has to do with forcing myself to articulate what it is I believe in and the kind of discipline I establish; and even the paranoia and the fear that I undergo before I go in the classroom. I think that all of that is useful, but I also think that I give a lot of stuff away that I need for myself.

I give them my ideas, too. I do.

My Teaching Methods

I think it's partly to do with how I can structure circumstances where students can surprise themselves and me.

I believe that success breeds success, and that if they have confidence, if they feel strongly about their ideas, or what they produce, then they can build on that. But if they're always tentative or unsure or insecure, then it's difficult, that's not to say that they shouldn't doubt or question. But if they're encouraged, if they feel supported and told how to improve and they're inspired by the introduction of ideas then I think that anything is possible.

If I'm simply putting them through paces, I don't think that's creative.

The criticism is not personal.

If they believe that my motives are coming from a legitimate place, if it's not personal, if my remarks are not to minimize them or humiliate them, then they'll take it. I think that they're tough; I don't have to handle them with kid gloves or patronize them.

I question the stances which they adopt, in a nonthreatening way, that leaves them room to question it themselves.

It depends on the individual and I do have to remember that this is first year. If I feel that somebody has invested a lot of energy, I'm not going say, "Sorry, but I'm not interested." That's not good enough on my part. I think that I do have to read the situation. What's their background? What do they bring to this? And really try to find ways of taking it out of the mundane and into some other realm.

It's about how to make the work stronger and better, how to get the intent through to others.

Students gain security from this feeling of "Oh, I've learned this measurable quantitative thing." I think that that's predictable, but they've got to know how to use it.

I believe that it's more important, or more critical, to invent structures that allow them to surpass themselves, that allow them to be better than they thought they could be. Occasionally that happens, and I think that that's what it's all about.

It is not about trivializing their ideas.

It's about what the student is trying to communicate and what are we reading? What materially do we have in front of us? Let's look at it and see what it is.

Sometimes I feel that the potential or the possibilities within the assignments is not pushed at all; and I'm afraid that my disappointment will show.

I think that the worst thing that can happen when a student is presenting is if my lip curls and I think, "Boring, boring, boring, is that the best that you can come up with?"

If a work fails, I can analyze it, I can take it apart, I can discuss it. Why isn't it working, what's the problem here? I think that they can learn a lot from the work that fails, that is if they aren't in tears while I'm at it.

A discussion is possible. "Have you thought about this?" or "What would happen if you did that?" or if they changed the context: if they hung it from the ceiling.

I think about the parents.

I feel for the students because they're entering the college when there's such an uncertain climate out there.

I think about the parents, and why they support them in coming to art school in the first place. I think about what jobs they think that they might get, because chances are they're not going to get a job. Getting grants will be a rarity, rather than part of the expectation, part of the system, part of the structure of support.

I mean they're going to have to find some other way to support their desire to be an artist.

When I Was a Student

When I was a student I never expected to be taken seriously as an artist. I mean, there were two women that I knew about whose work was exhibited. So for me, I thought, "Well, I'll just do this on the side and get a real job."

I think that there are different barriers that generations have to confront. And maybe that's a good thing because they have to take it on.

A Student of Mine

Recently I had a really traumatic experience. A student at the beginning of the semester was late with the first assignment I'd given them. He always arrived late, like around 11 o'clock, (class starts at 9:00), he strolled into class this one morning with his late assignment and he said, "I'm really embarrassed, but I'm not a three-dimensional person and I just want to paint and so here I am and

here it is" and I said: "I'd be embarrassed to hand that in too" well, I would be embarrassed. It's honest, and he said it himself, but that's not diplomatic, right?

I also didn't want to waste my time. So I gave him back what he had said to me. It was all right for him to say it; it wasn't all right for me to say it. I had injured him by saying it. I did take a risk, but I was tired of this kind of casual indifference. I thought that if I tolerated it from him, then I have to tolerate it from others.

He petitioned to drop my class, because of the "poisoned environment" that he had to function in. I took it personally. I really felt that my motives were to get the best out of him, and not to let him coast because he wanted to paint. I just didn't think it was good enough.

So he dropped the course, in the long run you don't want people like that in your class anyway, but at the same time, I think I could have got him if he hadn't been able to squeak through the cracks. You see, I don't think that he will survive anyway; I think there are too many people out there who are desperate, who will fight.

My Political Role at the College

In the 1980s I was part of the movement to push the college towards hiring more full-time women instructors, but I wasn't in the forefront because I can't do that. I can't do public speaking. I can function very well in more intimate meetings or DACs, but I get intimidated by the formality of council or large meetings.

I wanted to ensure that there was more balance, because women weren't part of the decision making or mainstream of the college.

Women held part-time positions teaching night classes, where they had no job security--well, virtually none. Although the college was not bad, if you taught part-time over a number of years, you had an expectation of gaining more teaching periods as long as you weren't totally incompetent.

It doesn't even matter.

This year has been a test because there's been team teaching, critique, studio, and sculpture practice. I haven't had time to process it all, and it's going to be different again next year, so it doesn't even matter.

Losing their jobs.

I find it stressful but not for the reasons that you might think, like my job isn't threatened. I also feel that I'm trying to do a good job, so I don't feel that I'm getting away with anything, or being paid for something that I'm not producing. I feel that I'm earning my salary.

But what I do find stressful is the climate in the college and the fact that people have responsibilities and are afraid of losing their jobs, and that this is real. So I do feel for the faculty.

My Classroom

In the past, I've had classes of about 20 students. This year is different, 30 students is too many, when every week they're presenting work. To try to get through that and give students feedback, with enough in-depth criticism and insuring that everyone is participating is hard to do with larger numbers.

In the past, I always felt a vested interest in the upper-year students, because I only had those who were choosing the course because they were interested--because they were told by other students it was a good class. They were attentive, they hung on each other's every word--they also had a sense of community outside of the class. Now that there are core requirements, I'm getting some that don't necessarily want to be there.

Sneaking out the back.

There are students who are sleeping or sneaking out the back. I mean, I know there are students this year who are avoiding their responsibility to their work. And they don't care. All they seem to worry about is, "Did you mark me down on the attendance list?"

My Experiences with an Upper-Year Program

I have to say this and I say it with reservation because I believe in the program.

I feel that for second-year students it's too heavily theory-weighted at the moment, and I think that students get thrown into the theory before they have any sense of who they are. Especially--if I think about the first-year students I have, who haven't got a

clue, with all kinds of preconceived notions about what art is, and then they have to start interpreting theory and they haven't produced anything, they don't have a sense of themselves.

The problem with dogma.

Then in second year they start looking over their own shoulder and thinking, does it fit into this theory or that theory.

Its important to have produced enough work so that they have a sense of where they're coming from, what their strengths are; what they believe. All of that changes, but if they're thrown up against the jargon too early, it's intimidating; and I think it makes them doubt themselves and their own understanding.

The Dogs

"Sorry about this background noise but it's atmosphere," M said with laughter at about the halfway point of our interview. This was in reference to her two dogs.

When listening to the interview there are moments when the incessant discussions of the dogs almost overpower our words.

Here's a rubber boxing glove.

"What are you two doing, talking so earnestly while the world is passing you by? Here's a rubber boxing glove, why don't you throw it for us? Oh you don't like that one, well, we've got an entire drawer full of other things over here, lets see, how about a large orange carrot, no? Well, what about this plain old ball? You

understand that don't you? Ball means throw, play, hide and seek, I don't care, whatever you want, but come on, lets dooo something."

They continued their work while we continued ours.

Creativity

I don't like the word creativity.

Every time I finish a body of work, I think that's it, I'll never produce anything ever again. Because I've exhausted my creativity. It's horrible. I mean it's worse than dealing with issues that are difficult to deal with; this feeling that I'm spent, or used up, or no longer creative. I'm a cliché or something.

It's not consistent.

I don't take it for granted, that it always comes back. I think "when am I ever going to produce again?" I'm afraid all the time-- because there's not only: "Will I get another idea?" It's that the idea has to be better than any other idea I've ever had. It's not consistent. I feel that I've gotten through a couple of times. It's irregular, it's uneven.

I think that creativity is something that happens in spite of you or because of circumstance, or because you're lucky or there's an accident.

Indulging my curiosity.

I think that I've learnt over a period of time what motivates me and what my creative process is. I can put myself in a situation that forces me to come to terms with things and find ways of

negotiating, that I haven't done before, or that I haven't thought about before.

I think creativity is indulging my curiosity. So that the questions that I am asking through my work are real. It's not demonstrating my cleverness. It's not demonstrating my skill, what I already know. Somebody who represents this for me is Murray Favro. He doesn't flaunt art jargon, but I believe his work. I think that his work is truly honest, strong, and unique and I admire him.

He's not saying look at this mark.

I suppose my very first model is da Vinci, when I look at his drawings, I see they're about understanding, they're about figuring out on paper. He's not saying look at this mark that I'm making, how skillful it is; but rather he's pointing to his mind, I can see it working through the marks on the page and it's remarkable.

Response to Article

I thought it was okay. But I'm resisting because it's a category. I think that there's something to it, that it feels fairly genuine, that there is this nudging or scratching at the scab or whatever it is, in order to unearth more than what is visible.

I have to change the rules.

I know what motivates me. I have to feel that my back is against the wall. It's true, and I hate it--it's when I feel that there's no room for me. And I feel, I'm sorry, but this isn't what it's about and this isn't a good enough description and it's not inclusive.

I hate putting myself in that position because it's difficult, and it's...well, I mean, painful.

I don't feel that the structure accommodates me, I don't feel that I can jump through the hoops that are expected. I have to change the rules. So I have to change the structure in order to be understood, or seen in a way that I can accept, I don't think it's validation: it's to be understood. It's to be heard.

It's not a place that I really want to go.

I don't want to be melodramatic about it, but it's not a place that I really want to go to, it's like whining. I think about the piece that I did for the breast cancer exhibition. I equate it to what these women are experiencing; they have breast cancer and they're frightened and they're scared. But if they complain, or if they yell, or if they're unhappy, or if they're...then they won't get the sympathy or the support or the care that they need.

Epilogue

I know that personally, I put all kinds of things in my own way. Like I've got to do the laundry, I've got to water the plants, and I've got to pick every fucking scale off every leaf on the plant; I can invent a million zillion reasons why I can't work. But eventually I have to do it.

V's Story

V has been teaching at the college since 1973, he is 59 years old.

I can't separate, when I go home, I'll still be teaching.

My Roll as an Artist/Teacher

For me it's always been a learning experience.

I never really look at myself as a teacher. I mean, since I've been at an institution, I suppose, I am identified: He is the teacher, he is one of them.

I tell students, "I'm just a guy who hangs around here."

I feel uncomfortable with the word teaching. To teach without teaching, to unteach--anything but to teach, to leave you in doubt of the teacher's ability to assess.

There I am.

There's nothing more exhilarating than to walk into a class of foundation students--and there I see this kid sitting among them, I say, my God, there I am, look at me, 18 years old.

I love walking into a class and kidding myself that I can feel the positive and negative vibrations coming from the various people. I still enjoy walking into a classroom and playing, acting, performing, never knowing the answers, asking the questions, hopefully just getting more questions; hopefully people understanding there really are no answers.

If there's a few students who intuitively feel it's worthwhile to go along with this guy for the ride, let's do it. So we mutually have a lot of fun.

The other side of my solitude.

Teaching, I'm using the word loosely, feeds my--the other side of my solitude. If I have a choice, I would much rather nourish my solitude than get on a stage and perform for the sake of whatever I'm performing for.

If I have my preference I prefer to withdraw and just generate my own excitements from the soil and whatever is around it.

My Teaching Methods

From my point of view the answer lies in encouraging people to trust their intuitive qualities.

I encourage the breaking down of categories. See what you can bring; go to a point where you can appreciate the magic that a child sees. This sense of awe. But always realizing there will be authority out there saying, you're a child and we must guide you for your own sake.

How the hell do I itch it?

I've based it on the idea that I'm doing things I would have liked when I was a student, but then at the same time, I don't know what the hell I liked when I was a student. There was this undefined something. I knew there was a crazy scratch in my head and I had to itch. How the hell do I itch it?

Even though we are bombarded by history and all the knowledge we are supposed to have, I say to students, "Listen, aren't you lucky you're not born in the year 3000? Just think how much more art history you would have to labor through before you come to you."

I've never forgotten.

I never can get the idea out of my mind of what it was like to be a student nearly 40 years ago. To feel impressionable, to come here and survive the system.

I've never forgotten this. What it is like--maybe it would have been a good thing to forget it. I am now looked at as the master, the authority, but I've never seen it this way.

By going to the instructors I could find out their limitations. Some of them would admit they were human, and others would pull this, "I am the instructor, I know what's good for you, and when time passes you will be able to understand what I said." Well I found that was never the case.

Stepping stones.

There is no such thing as right, there is no such thing as wrong, there simply is. I'll avoid making the same mistake but then instead of going right I go left, Jesus, it's another mistake--stepping stones.

I'm always surprised that people take very positive stands as to what students must know. I say yes, but why do you think this is?

I'm still puzzled when people still say, there is basic, intermediate, and advanced drawing or painting.

How old is your mother?

The usual inclination of students is to say, well it's all been done, where am I going to fit into it? I say, "How long do you plan to live? How old is your mother, your father, your grandfather?"
Ninety-five. Great. Give yourself time. You've got lots of time.

I guess for some students it could be frustrating, because the irony of education is we had it all as kids, this incredible magic of the world.

To keep my spirit alive.

For me, it's to come into a place like this and try to keep my spirit alive. It's a very selfish approach.

In this place I've considered myself fortunate, that no matter what curriculum or course outlines have been placed in front of me, I just say, "Yep, great, fine," and I walk into a class and I do whatever I feel is necessary to keep my spirit alive.

So I've always looked at institutions simply as being that: an institution, four walls, a ceiling, hopefully warm in the wintertime, if not, I prefer them to be colder so we can run around a bit and work up a sweat.

I Spent 2 Years in the North

I spent 2 years up in the North among the Inuit--it reoriented my whole thinking about what art and life are.

I was a kid when I went up there, 26 years old. I was dealing with people who didn't have a word for art or art school. And yet

they were reproducing things in the print shop, which we built from the ground up, which literally left me physically shaking.

The horizon is deceptive.

Up there, in Povungnituk, the horizon is deceptive, the highest point of land is only about 67 feet above sea level but it seems like you're in the Alps.

One day I was walking out onto the tundra, the wind was at my back, and I just kept walking, on and on, out into the tundra, further, and further, and further, then suddenly I felt so tiny walking in this big land. I don't know what the hell happened. Maybe I tripped and hit my head, but suddenly I felt as though there was a growth inside of me, I became so bloody big--bigger than the Jolly Green Giant, I just seemed to grow and grow and grow. It was an incredible feeling. And then suddenly, I don't know, maybe God Almighty pricked my ass with a pin, and I very slowly deflated again and came down to the size I am; but it wasn't a small size and it wasn't a large size. There it was. I didn't go out and become raving born-again type, but it was an incredible experience.

We have a story to tell you.

And then of course, seeing this incredible energy, no excuses, coming from the Inuit--we have a story to tell you, and we're communicating through body language and then spending a couple of days up in a mental hospital in Thunder Bay and just by chance I was invited by one of the therapists into the room where she set the environment for people just to use materials; and I said, "Whoah,

okay." I've always been fond of children's work, their incredible uninhibited quality. Suddenly these three things came together.

After coming down from the North, I found it very difficult to fit myself into categories.

I use wood but I'm not the carpenter.

I know that society likes to categorize us; they said, who are you? What are you? And I said, well listen, I use wood but I'm not the carpenter, I use paint but I'm not a painter, I use stone but I'm not a mason; I use all these things. But if I'm crossing the border and the guy says who are you? I say sculptor; fine--get across, but if you say you're a "thing" maker, they say, wait a minute. So how much hassle do you want to have?

I could hug them.

The sound of words is a very meaningful to me, because when I was living among the Inuit, even though I didn't know their language the communication was tremendous. I found that I could hug them, I could touch them, I could dance with them, I could squeeze their hands, I could laugh; we could stomp our feet, we could point, we could push, we could scribble on pieces of paper. God help us in our society down here if we did this, right?

It's going back, I guess, to our animal instincts--sniffing you out, eye contact, the shrug of a shoulder and so on. To put trust in words is something I really don't encourage.

Language is so abstract--what we say is so--we think we define what we feel through a word. Literary people, literate

people, or people who use a lot of words, use a lot of words but don't express a hell of a lot.

My Teachers

Who were my teachers? I'm looking back; and it wasn't people in institutions. Did they teach me anything? They taught me their limitations.

My landlady.

My teachers were, a woman like my landlady who said, "You can do anything you want when you're checking into my house, but the one thing you can't do is throw beer bottles through a window." Whoah!

A model.

One of my greatest drawing teachers was a model who didn't realize it. I was an 18-year-old kid, and the guy next to me had the facility to join the elbows to the buttocks or whatever the hell he was doing: it looked like the model up on the stand. Me: I ran through 50 pages of newsprint, frantically putting a line down, not satisfied; I didn't know what the hell I wanted to do.

I know when the session was over, the guy next to me had faithfully rendered this model up there. I guess I felt a bit awkward and yes, jealous--I'll never be able to do it, this guy's fantastic, I might as well go home; the instructor is shaking his head: I didn't follow the prescribed route which was going to get me there.

I still remember this model putting on her robe, coming over to me, and flipping through every page and with a very straight face, she looked me in the eyes and said: "My! But you do draw fast!" Come on, I was 18 years old. Was it a joke? Did she put me on? I prefer to think she saw something there that I didn't understand, didn't see.

My aunt.

My teachers again, who were they? Well, my aunt who was a seamstress, always used to carry needle and thread in her apron. When I was young, I built a house and put a roof on it, but if you didn't know enough to put a weight on top, it would separate--in the morning, of course, the roof looks like a crocodile yawning. And so when my aunt saw this and she saw my expression, she said "Kein problem!" She simply took needle and thread and sewed the roof to the wall. Now, come on, how old was I, 5, 6 years old? This isn't what I wanted. I was frustrated. But when I think on it now, filtering through, that was one of my teachers.

An old lady.

I was 11 years old when an old lady put her finger on the blackboard and ran it down through my drawing of three camels and she rubbed her fingers together and said, "My goodness! This is chalk!"...A tragedy! My God! She ran her finger through my work of art!

Why has this lasted with me? It was a chalk drawing, temporary; eventually it was washed off anyway. But all it was was

chalk. Smudged together. And it's the way she understood it. She didn't care that it was three wise men...She had to get close--"my, it's chalk."

This is theory on the receiving end.

Art Brut.

I don't know if you know or are familiar with, Dubuffet's Art Brute and all this stuff, I realized he was already out there a long time, but I found it on my own. It was very exciting, you understand? In a way, I think I'm doing a disservice to students when I say "Art Brute, you should look it up." because I'm bombarding them with information. I didn't know what the hell Art Brute was; I found it by myself--just like I found Dostoyevsky's book "The Idiot" one day--walking along I said "Hey, there's a title that says the idiot," and I felt idiotic, I'll buy this in order to read it.

My education didn't introduce me to Dostoyevsky--it was my own curiosity later in life. So yeah, the creative spirit--whatever the hell that is--but it's not relegated to just coming to an art school or a studio.

I came across this writing by Dubuffet where he said--what was it--the only worthwhile art is the work of children, mad people, and primitives, I said, "Good God! That's exactly what I felt all along." But I am seeing it now in black and white, right in front of my eyes. So Michelangelo must have been an absolute lunatic, lying on his back for how many years, with paint dripping in his eye. But when people say a mad person, they automatically imagine some--so what is this thing called madness, who defines it?

My kids.

My kids have been great teachers. Two feet, three feet tall, running across the room and yelling, "Daddy look!". Well, Daddy was almost six feet up and Daddy had to get down there, hands and knees, and look up and say: "My God, I have forgotten, I've forgotten--it's incredible."

Creativity

No. I can't define creativity. I think it's just--I'm born, and I know I'll die, and in between I have to pass my time.

There just is.

It's just semantics. There's no such thing as beauty; there's no such thing as ugliness. There just is. And suddenly every blasted inch comes alive. I don't have to go to the Louvre to see great art, I don't have to go to a junkyard to see great junk, I mean it just is...Energy just oozes out...an overload of information--where does my ego come in?

It's right here.

For me it's a continuous filtration of stuff.

Look through an electromagnifying glass and a piece of stainless steel is like the Grand Canyon. Whoah, another dimension.

Making things is a continuous process.

I mean, I could say to you, "Alex, welcome to my exhibition." It's right here. Is it ego, or is it letting go ego, or is it because

you're taping it and you're transcribing it and you might use it? At least somebody's heard this little piece of thinking.

The electricity.

The magic that is involved by leaving a mark behind, or changing a position of an object, which has happened millions of times, but not at this very moment, that this dot appears and it's a pure miracle. It's absolutely incredible! The electricity--just before whatever your drawing tool is, touches the surface, it's like a spark: is it going to ignite or isn't it?

Two nails stuck together.

Sometimes when I'm nailing and I find two nails stuck together, "Wow! That's great!" and then another two, at first it gets annoying because if I run out of them I have to split them in half, but then suddenly, I come upon one with three of them together, and I realize, my God, this is getting exciting. I hope this nailing keeps on going 'cause I want to see if there's going to be a clump with five nails stuck together!

Response to Model Three

It looks interesting as a drawing. This is my problem: I look at it graphically, and then I forget to read the messages.

I have no idea what kind of a graph or drawing I would come up with in order to clarify this more to people who are interested in figuring it out.

I want an audience of one. I have to do it for myself. Whether anybody sees it or not is a bonus, but this wouldn't prevent me from making this bloody thing.

I realize I have no choice.

There have been moments when I started something and let's say I added to it, and there was no pressure as far as time, or space, or where I'm going to put it. But I knew something was happening in me, that I had to daily contribute to this thing. I realize I have no choice. I am an intermediary following this thing along.

There are pieces where I hope I'll be healthy enough, and live long enough, to be able to ride this crest of a high. So even though I am talking to you right now, here, I am building things. It doesn't mean I'm going to rush home and put them together--this is very exciting.

Now what?

As a creative person I know that when I'm are riding this crest, I know it isn't going to go on forever. What's it called, postwhatever depression? Suddenly I've gone so far and whoom! Now what? And all the stuff I made in the past is no consolation for the moment I feel right now.

Epilogue

Lifting my feet over the edge and feeling my cat at the bottom of my feet and seeing my red geraniums and the voice behind me

saying, "Oh Jeez, it snowed again!" Wow! I mean, there it is! The light filtering through, the dog getting nervous, the chilliness when you open the door, and it isn't quite as chilly as what you anticipated looking through the window.

I've got to have something to back me up, right? I mean, it's like a ship carrying a life-raft, hoping it won't have to use it, but just in case.

Summary

This chapter has presented the "stories" of four artist/teachers who between them represent over 90 years of experience in this field. It illustrates dedicated professionals who take their work as teachers and as artists in equal measures.

They are all concerned for their students and strive to provide the best teaching environments possible.

Conditions of openness and a willingness to trust one another was achieved through the process of coinquiry (O'Connor and Wolfe, 1991). The participants joined the researcher in the process of building the texts.

CHAPTER FIVE: INTERPRETATION AND SUMMARY.

Interpretation of the Study

I was privileged to engage with four unique individuals who are deeply complicated, rich, and full of vitality, who gave me their words, allowing me to enter their thinking minds and create their stories. They tell me the process was fun, that to reflect on their words was instructive, that to have their ideas ordered was useful.

The Voices

In this final chapter, I will present the various findings by utilizing strategic levels of voice. I shall begin with a general overview written from the researchers perspective, followed by personal reflections. I shall then list findings of what the artist/teacher is, does, thinks, feels, etc.

These findings are culled from the narrative stories, their collisions and intersections; what they say collectively is larger than any individual story. The voice does not generalize, rather it magnifies.

This section is followed by the herald, whose voice is the preamble to the concluding metavoice. The metavoice came from the depths within, I reflect on its birthing, at the relevant point in the text.

General Overview

Response to Model Three

The utilization of Model Three from Cawelti, Rappaport and Wood (1992) was an important focal point. There was mixed response to it, "Interesting," "It's OK," "I like the visual language," "It looks interesting as a drawing." However, it did not create the discussion that I had anticipated.

In all cases the interview quickly moved on to discussion of creativity in personal terms. It is, however, possible to interpret the entire interview process in relationship to the article, as they were each, creative, engaged, and "becoming."

In Model Three terms of entering, or crossing the line from visible to nonvisible, to "the artist not being continuously bound" (pp 90-91), the participants equate a similar feeling when fully engaged in a creative project.

"V" said, "...and there was no pressure as far as time, or space, or where I'm going to put it...I knew something was happening in me, that I had to daily contribute...I realize I have no choice. I am an intermediary..."

"N" said, "Art is a tool to go to the other side which is the unknown...maybe it has to do with God...maybe liberation."

"P" said, "The vista then opens up and I have this terrific panorama. I feel that there's no tomorrow, I can continue and continue."

The major impact of Model Three was in relationship to the researcher. Throughout this thesis writing and research I have felt

the visual reference, referred to by Cawelti, Rappaport and Wood (1992), of the bubble, pushing against the line and wanting to disappear to the other "not continuously bounded" side, the "non-visible" (pp 90-91), knowing that I must reach it in order to continue the work.

That this is a creative exercise is born out by the similarity to the Model Three. I felt "free to let the subject evolve as it will" and many of the "simultaneous mechanical" listings have happened (Cawelti, Rappaport and Wood, 1992, pp 90-91).

That I related instinctively to hermeneutic analysis when I read its description of circling, feeding, growing, creating meaning out of itself--from itself, that it talked to me of the creative process, was born out throughout this research study.

Analysis of the Narratives

I set out to analyze the four stories in Chapter 4 and ran headlong into a glaring truth. "I have already done it," I kept saying. They are what they are. They are the narrative stories of four individuals. They can not be generalized. To pick them apart for generalized themes distorts and minimizes what they each are. To say, for instance, "that all participants agree that students must be encouraged," is banal and pointless. The hours of work to create the individual stories from their words would be wasted. When I say I created the stories, I mean that I worked their words as objects on the page, into an order that held up to a narrative structure using the hermeneutic methodology (Maitland-Gholson & Ettinger, 1994). The arrival, or understanding of that structure, is explained in Chapter 3.

Narrative Analysis

I firmly place the four narratives into what Polkinghorne (1995) referred to as narrative analysis versus analysis of narrative. In other words, the process of creating the narratives was the analysis. As described in Chapter 3 the hermeneutic circle was utilized in an ongoing and exhaustive processing of the data into a whole, as Polkinghorne (1995) correctly said,

The analytic development of a story from the gathered data involves recursive movement from the data to an emerging thematic plot. Evolving a plot that serves to configure the data elements into a coherent story requires testing the beginning attempts at emplotment with the database. If major events or actions described in the data conflict with or contradict the emerging plot idea, then the plot idea needs to be adapted to better fit or make sense of the elements and their relationships. The development of a plot follows the same principles of understanding that are described by the notion of the hermeneutic circle. The creation of a text involves the to-and-fro movement from parts to whole that is involved in comprehending a finished text. (p. 16)

A Set of Case Studies

By creating a set of individual narratives on the same topic a greater understanding of that which is under study is made available to the reader (Seidman, 1991). These narratives present four unique visions on the same topic and they demonstrate the shift from the,

"search for the universal to a respect for the unique" (Stokrocki, 1991, p. 48).

The Researcher's Perspective

I am coming from the inside, the "emic" point of reference (Stout, 1995). I am an artist/teacher from the same department, in the same institution, as those that I interviewed. This prelocates the discussion; we have already entered into the artist/teacher space at the time of the interview. This may explain why the narrative stories are solidly framed in the artist/teacher position. My early interpretation of this phenomena attributed this to the participants, but I now realize it is equally a reflection of myself.

I wonder what stories there would be if I had been located on the outside? Doing research as the objective observer, the "etic" point of reference. Undoubtedly a different set would have survived the hermeneutic process. This is the point, all outcomes are dependent on who we are and the place that we are at, our "location," to say otherwise is both dishonest and impossible (Gadamer, 1986). As the researcher I must recognize my subjective self (Kincheloe et al., 1992).

The study concentrated on the collection of four narrative stories. The context is bound within the prestated subject of artist/teacher. It became clear to me how much we were all acting within this context. My location as an equal in occupational terms, (although younger by 8 years to the closest in age, and 23 years younger than the oldest) must be recognized.

Personal Findings

An insight derived from this research was my understanding of my role as an artist/teacher. Within this slashed-together hybrid, my primary question was housed, what where the connections between these two occupations?

The Artist/Teacher

I started from the premise that these functions were separate but connected, that they may exist in conflict with each other, and that creativity played a part in their relationship.

What these four narratives speak of most strongly, is a complete, nonseparation of this role. To be an artist is to be a teacher.

When "V" says, "I never really look at myself as a teacher," this is in reaction to the word teacher and not to teaching itself, as to strive to "unteach", is still to teach.

As I wrote in Chapter 1, I now realize that the artist/teacher function is synonymous for the participants of this study. It became clear to me that the reason I chose this as a research topic was because I am in a state of transition, having completed it, I feel an acceptance within myself to be an artist/teacher.

I knew the four participants as working artists and viewed their role at the college as something they did, almost as an aside. This has changed. I realize the totality and depth of commitment they each bring to their role as artist/teachers. This change of perception is further discussed in the subsequent section.

I believe that the narratives exemplify a full relationship with creativity and that its role is supportive to the participants. That they live in constant communion with creativity, is in my opinion, absolutely clear.

As to the question of whether their position as teachers influenced their work as artists and vice versa, the answer was yes. The precise degree varied from indirect to direct. But here again, once the premise has been shifted and the role unified, it becomes a mute point. It is a complete feeding system, it does not take, rather it is an additive process that feeds to a larger whole.

The Student as Reflected Self

"M" says, "I believe that it's more important or more critical to invent structures that allow you to surpass yourself, that allow you to be better than you thought you could be. Occasionally that happens, and I think that that's what it's all about." This statement fell into both a self-reflective one and that of advice to students. I realized, that in the interview it was ambiguous which (i.e. self or student) was being referred to.

As artist/teachers we are constantly traversing that line with our students; they reflect our own position. We too are the student, when this is understood clearly it is a liberating phenomena, because it means we can truly participate in our own classes. Instead of sitting on the outside looking in, we are engaged in a dynamic process of "being becoming," a dialogue that is the hermeneutic whole.

I am drawn to once again to quote Freire (1972),
 Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the
 students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term
 emerges: teacher-student with students-teacher. The
 teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but
 one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students,
 who in their turn while being taught also teach. They
 become jointly responsible for a process in which all
 grow. (Jarvis, 1992, p. 53)

"V" suggests a similar condition when he sees himself as he
 walks into a classroom, "I see this kid sitting among them, I say, my
 God, there I am, look at me, 18 years old." I believe this is also
 Gadamer's (1974) point of being "in the game" (cassette recording,
 OISE). If we teach without this reflection of self, then it will be
 false. When this is understood it is daunting, for it is a challenge to
 honesty. The participants of this study all teach in reflection with
 their students. The participants of this study all teach honestly.

The next section presents an extended list of findings from the
 stories, that if taken as "truths" to teach by, I believe would produce
 exemplary teachers.

These findings are found solidly embodied in the four
 participants of this study.

I Found...

- artist/teachers who believe that truth and honesty are vital
 components of their work, and that to engage with the students is
 a real process;

- artist/teachers who believe teaching happens at the moment of interactive response with the student, the one-on-one dialogue.
- artist/teachers who know that as students are challenged with progressively harder and more complex projects, time is needed for the process to mature;
- artist/teachers who cared passionately about their students, who used memories of their student self, to create interesting and challenging assignments;
- artist/teachers who desperately wanted their students to start the process of discovering their true creative self; who recognized that this is difficult, and not something that happens without dedicated hard work;
- artist/teachers who had real concern about class sizes; knowing that as the classes got larger the potential for the student to coast, to "sneak out the back," grew also; who were concerned about adequate time to relate to every student as an individual and not as a number;
- artist/teachers who's personal creativity is a continual ongoing discovery, with magic in the process; not a known thing that is there for the taking. They understand the process to an extent, but accept that it is elusive; there is a real fear that this could be the last creative adventure, that it may never return;
- artist/teachers who understand that creativity is a spiritual process, of the living moment, that it is part of the cosmos; that waking up in the middle of the night, realizing that the assignment is incorrect, that it must be changed, is a challenge, and a gift of that living moment;

- artist/teachers who know that the spirit must be alive to teach; that it is a complex and deeply committed practice. The concern for the student is constant. That, "yes," that may be it, when a student walks out, but equally wanting to connect to that student, despite the action;
- artist/teachers who expressed deep commitment to their work, who view it as a way of living, not as a job. As a way to survive in the present, which allows the spirit to soar, and builds the stairs to the stars that get further and further away;
- artist/teachers who recognize the gift of the Foundation student is their freshness, and that worthy projects can challenge their preconceptions; careful not to break their ego by being too critical;
- artist/teachers who were concerned that the dogma in second year may be too pronounced and that the individuality of the student may be lost.

The Researcher's Story as Metatheme

Multiplicity

There are multiple influences. I did not try to place the interviews into categories. I tried, instead, to allow them to flow, I did not want unified, repeatable, sameness. I was fascinated by their uniqueness, that each story drifted to its own place of being, that it became its own self, that I was there as a conduit of the story.

This process fed me. From it I have a much greater understanding of my holistic self. It reinforced my feelings; I re-saw these artist/teachers as unique, special, fulfilled, and vital to the overall well-being of the college. It is in their uniqueness, their vital individuality, that their gift to the student is found.

In the following two sequences, I shall call on the voices of "M," "N," "P," and "V," to join with me in a narrative metatheme (Emihovich, 1995; Polkinghorne, 1995; Tesch, 1989) or as I prefer to call it, a metavoice.

At this juncture it is useful to review the process that has lead to this voice and to place all that is to follow within the context of the "acquired voice," that is, the cumulative voice that belongs to the four participants added together, not to add for adding sake but for strength and consistency of message. I wish to do this with a quote from my journal.

I heard their voices-their voices were real-they exist as text that became concrete. Four individuals who gave me snippets. My job was to create an order to their voices by splicing, reconfiguring--blocking--trading one block to another block--sameness to sameness. I created blocks that held together as full paragraphs of connected context.

The headings jumped out as strong indicators of the meaning in each block. Blocks began to relate to other blocks--these took on a shape--a placement--an order--each block fit, like each word fit, like each sentence fit. The ordering is a structure that is built on from the bottom up--it's grass roots order that crosses over and is real (Journal entry May 16 ,1996).

The voice represented in the first sequence is, in a manner of speaking, the herald of the voice to follow, the metavoice.

The experience of the creation of the metavoice was powerful--I felt the bottling up of energy--it was fighting for escape. I had to prowl around it, releasing small bits, until it burst forth in a surge of words that filled pages--the raw data were angry, fierce and intense, I felt the need for catharsis and its end brought sleep, the energy was abated.

I knew I would still work the data, that is a given, but after the birthing I knew it would be done.

The Herald

I Understand Intuitively

The hardest part is to reach the individual who does not get it. What does that mean? I understand it intuitively, I talk about it. It is that point of liberation, which allows a student to fly without the rules, to realize that there are no rules, that the creative spirit is right there in front of them, waiting the tapping.

To teach that there is nothing to teach, to un-teach. To not break their backs, to push them so far, but not too far. Yes it is hard, it is a continuous struggle.

It is a long path, to be able to one day look back and say, "hey, there I am, 18 years old, and I'm now 59," to understand that conceptually. Up north, growing bigger and bigger only to have God prick my ass and deflate me, never to be normal again. That the flip

into the mouth of God may not happen, that the flow for which I strive, might one day dry up totally.

The student needs to take a flip and be tasted by God.

I know how hard that is to do. I have my own years of struggle to reflect on. I know how hard it is to find my own voice, how I had to struggle through layers hidden under the blanket of complacency; the shell of sameness that is in art magazines, in art museums, in art galleries, the "gestalt," that we are all caught in.

Creativity.

Creativity is not about some easy-to-produce formula that is prewritten, and all I have to do is follow some prescribed order and it all falls into place, it is hard, it is painful. I have to pick every fucking mite off the leaves before I can get there. I have to get myself into a corner and fight my way through. I have to wake up in the morning and realize it is all bullshit, and I will start all over again, because that is the honest thing to do.

Creativity is a continual reflection of where I am in my own search, that it is always fresh, that it is not something other than what it is now, that the moment is when I must be there, to respond to what is happening.

That it is a bridge and I am striving to get to the other side. That what I do is never it, or good enough, or finished, or complete. That there are always bits of a far larger whole that are continually circling just beyond reach, that cannot be pinned to some easy formula.

It could be over there or it could be over there, it doesn't matter as long as I am doing it.

Honesty.

I don't believe institutions are honest, they do not allow for honest communication. The student does not understand honesty, they have been trained in the mind set of "teacher" and "lessons," "outcomes" and "product;" money, lies, deceit.

There is no honesty, it is forbidden under the games of managers, the secret police want robots that will function on demand.

Each thought can be stripped further down. What does this actually mean? What am I saying when I place this material in this way, or that way? What am I saying with this or with that; not, what am I supposed to be saying, but what am I actually saying; in regards to what is in front of me, as honestly as possible, as close to the reality of the materials that are there.

Metavoice

I keep asking myself what am I doing? This doesn't make any sense, this constant hour after hour, going over and over the interview transcripts that have now become their own thing, that are autonomous entities. Each one unique, each echoing a part of the whole.

I hear the ring of truth, the hermeneutic circle is becoming a reality, they have taken on a life, I am simply trying to follow.

What gives me hope is that when I think of quantitative research it makes even less sense, categories, numbers and grids, reflecting a chosen answer, at a chosen moment, which then gets manipulated by computer programs and delivered as a truth, reflecting what? Whenever I fill out a survey I scream, "It depends on..." and refuse to answer, as it feels restrictive. I scream to escape. Qualitative research has truth value for me.

Meaning is therefore not just a product of time, history, and politics, but a basic characteristic of any text itself, and always in flux. The researcher's role, often viewed in a nihilistic light, is to understand that he or she creates fictions that inadequately portray traces of meaning.
(Maitland-Gholson & Ettinger, 1994, p. 23)

(The following text is taken from my field notes of April 19 1996, after 6 nights of narrative analysis).

I crashed after Wednesday's all nighter--I could not sleep and I became more and more agitated. I started acting strangely--ringing places, but not being able to speak coherently. I must have gone to bed and got up a half a dozen times.

Finally Jean came home and sent me to bed at 4:00 p.m.. I slept till 4:00 a.m., at which point I zapped off an e-mail to Patricia (my thesis advisor) telling her we'd (I'd) failed in the

push (to get this written). She returned e-mail, not to kill myself and that I don't need her to attend the defense.

I tried to get back into writing, but my shoulders still ache from the typing of Wednesday night. So I've given myself time out. I'm sitting in the sun at Monarch Park.

My brain doesn't even want to think about it.

The closest it will come, is writing this. Little glimpses, like shutters being opened but quickly closed, it's totally black inside. The shutters are more like sliders, with strong springs on them, they slide open and immediately, pull-shut, fast.

I should heed this, it's not just coming up for air, I actually need to disengage. Maybe I ought to stop for 2 days, break the cycle.

I get excited at the thought, and "P's" words come back to me (my reflective mind is not totally closed), "I'm afraid if I leave something, I may never come back."

My response, when my sister said that 20 years ago, was if it doesn't come back, its not meant to.

I breath, I feel the weight lift. I think I need to lie back and take a ride on my back for a few days, let my rhythms get their bearings.

Yes I know it will be hard to re-enter the "other side" as "N" called it, but then as "V" said, "Its just got to be," and "M" would agree with the pain of it.

My mind has opened by saying it doesn't have to.

As the manipulation of the data becomes smaller and smaller, the circle tightening--foreshadowing the whole. This "slice of life" that is frozen to the page, is its becoming...

Flight...

It is interesting to note the similarity of response to a syllabus demand from the top down. No one asked us about its creation, it was imposed, and we are mandated to input our classes to meet its criteria. "Bullshit!" I say. But so what? That's not what it's about, and I know that, so I play by rules that I do not agree with.

I scream for help knowing that it is a wasted breath. Those that can hear, the musses that listen, are smiling. "It's true," they say, "it's a mess down there. All that dependence on systems, as though that were all it was about."

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On and on this track to nowhere, to add up to the end of life when the figures will do no good. They have nothing to do with the vision of truth that calls forth the honest artist/teacher, striving to haul the individual out from under the dome of uniformity. A universal, North American cultural dominance that kills any chance of the creative self before it even blossoms.

The child's art that houses all the wonder of this world is the true creative self. It is outside the domain of studies and

predictability, it is in the domain of Plato. It is in the ONE of Fromm, the edge of Gadamer's horizon, the point of Jarvis's disjuncture. It is that point of reaching a student in the moment of reality. That is the "flow," the optimal experience, that is "being becoming," that is--just is.

It is in dialogue, the moment of intercourse, love, being in love, that calls forth the spirit that is alive. Without life continually reflecting back on itself, there is no chance of being close to what is being taught.

We, the artist/teacher, challenged by the student that challenges. Not accepting, "I'm embarrassed with this;" not accepting the complacency of the student interested only in making sure that they are marked off the attendance sheet. Parents are sacrificing to send them to be taught something that receives little respect in our rationalistic world; few will continue to produce art, after art school.

We know this, and yet we believe strongly in what we are doing; knowing that it is fundamental to our society that new generations are taught to question, to challenge, to never accept the momentary spout of dogma as truth. To learn to bite the hand that feeds, because the corporate, material world, needs to be challenged. That they feed us, that it is a two way street, we know, but this does not stop the challenge.

The student is a reflection of ourselves, if we can face them, then we can face ourselves. The projects must be honest, we must teach what we believe in.

Foundation studies is the beginning of the new, it is the beginning of the whole thing, the experiment must begin in Foundation. It is not a place to learn the constraints of the old, that cannot challenge the status quo, nor give us the new that may save us. Don't go to art school if all you want to learn is a trade to get by on.

Yes it's a risk, the whole God Damn thing is a risk, there are no guarantees, there is only the risk, there is only the moment--of your life--that is now, not tomorrow, not in some far off place that you may never get to.

The only thing that you can learn that will be of use is to find yourself, that creative being that is becoming and is not stagnant. To take it into a place that is "new." That demands total commitment.

There is no escape, there is only now, the rest is an illusion, the rest is hidden, to be faced as it happens. The horizon is constant but cannot remain static. This is the hardest thing for the student to learn, they have been trained to want answers. This is what is asked for, but cannot be given, they want the rules to be there, but there are none.

The fallacy of the postmodern world is that it lives with a rationalistic education system, wrapped up in outdated ideas that do not work, that do not allow that student to live. If they cannot live then no one can.

The challenge is to find projects that will connect them to survival. The continual demand on the teacher is to supply the youth that is theirs through their students; it is a two way street. When

both give, then the result is multiple, when there is a holding back on either side, the dynamic is lost, the room is dead, creativity has flown.

It is not about schedules, or syllabus, or time scales. It can happen in moments, it can happen right here, this is it.

The object that is made by the artist/teacher or the student only exists in dialogue with those who are in dialogue with it: it is like the musical instrument that dies when put in its case, reality is in the moment of playing, so too for the created object. The notion that there is some other meaning, some higher meaning, is false. There are no wrong turns.

It is in the continuum of doing that creativity happens. The Foundation student is beginning the process. They need not even be there, but for the peer solidarity that is a feeding system, as each is in their unique time bubble floating with the connections to others around them...

...we owe them everything...

...end of flight.

Epilogue

As an artist I play with fiction and reality, with time as a fluid entity. I can shift between my imagination (my creation of events) and the actual "facts." As an artist there is no truth, per se, it is always interconnected and multiple.

As an academic this changes, truth, structure, and procedure, are expected to be rigorously defensible by accepted criteria. This

is not difficult, I know where the lines are, I have been playing for a long time. As an artist/teacher I must play on the lines, I must blur the lines, push the boundaries so that there are no givens. As "V" said: "There are only questions."

This has been growth.

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Summary

This research study has investigated creativity and its relationship to the artist/teacher. It was found that creativity, although hard to define, is operative at all levels of the artist/teacher process. This research study found that for the participants, there was no separation between artist and teacher, that they are synonymous actions.

This study grounded itself in Gadamer's (1986) philosophical hermeneutics, and Jarvis' (1992) concept of disjuncture.

This research study viewed the narrative story as a powerful medium that creates meaning by its function of being (Polkinghorne, 1995), and that by creating a set of individual narratives, on the same topic, a greater understanding of that which is under study is made available to the reader (Seidman, 1991).

On a final note, this research study supports the findings of Cawelti, Rappaport, and Wood (1992), "that creative activity contains simultaneity, meaning multiple activities that occur

together as independent and ultimately inseparable elements" (p. 83).

Conclusions

A Call for Further Research

The study of creativity is an ongoing adventure into the inner processes of "being," as such further study is both inevitable and desirable.

This research study suggests multiple directions for further investigation.

For instance, further research could be directed towards the relationships between students of art (creativity) and their artist/teachers. In what manner does the interaction between artist/teacher and student operate? How does this operation impact the student and the artist/teacher? Can shared work between artist/teacher and student facilitate greater student growth? How do the classroom dynamics impact the learning process?

How do the institutional controls of an art college inhibit the creative actions of the individual artist/teacher who works within it? How do these controls affect the teaching process?

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Appendix A

Definition of Terms

Atolectic: "refers to a self-contained activity, one that is done not with the expectation of some future benefit, but simple because the doing itself is the reward" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 67).

DACs: Departmental Appointment Committees, the committees that hire new teachers.

Disjuncture: "occurs whenever there is lack of accord between the external world experienced by human beings and their internal biographical interests or knowledge...Change then, is one of the conditions of the modern world, and these conditions themselves are fuel for the fire of lifelong learning" (Jarvis, 1992, pp. 83-84).

Flow: "the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 4).

Foundation: the first year of art college.

Internal Logic: that which is related to an object for it's own purposes only. It does not have an external function.

New Media: A department that specializes in new form of expression especially electronic media.

Appendix B

Sample Cover Letter Sent with Initial Contact

Dear (Participants name),

I am presently conducting a research study to explore creativity and its relationship to the professional artist/teacher. It is my hope that you will agree to participate. Your involvement will consist of two interviews, no more than 45 minutes each, approximately a week apart.

I shall be conducting similar interviews with three additional colleagues in the Foundation Department. The raw data will be the fuel for my analysis.

Each interview session will be open-ended and conversational. The interviews will be tape recorded and the resulting transcripts made available to you.

To create a common point of reference I am including with this letter the article 'Modeling Artistic Creativity: An Empirical Study'. You do not need to read the entire article, but I would draw your attention to Figure 3, which depicts a visual mapping device along the bottom of the page linked to text segments above. Both the visual and the text are interrelated so that they harmonize into a comprehensive 'picture'. You can flip from one form of 'reading' to another, thus checking on the location of the concept, in time and space. In my opinion, this is a powerful rendition of the complex mechanisms involved in the creative process.

I would also ask you to note the conclusion to the article, which states "that creative activity contains simultaneity, meaning multiple activities that occur together as independent and ultimately inseparable elements".

I have also included 'background information' on the research study for you to read.

I look forward to working with you on this project. I would like to set up a time for the first interview in the very near future. I can meet at any location and time that is convenient to you. I shall be contacting your voice mail to reiterate this request for your valued assistance.

Thanking you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,
Alex de Cosson.

Appendix C

Information Supplied to Participants

Background Information

Study Title: Creativity and the Working Artist/Teacher: The Relationships.

Researcher: Alex de Cosson, MFA, BFA
Graduate Student, Master of Education Program,
Brock University.

I shall attempt to give you some insights into my decision to engage in a qualitative study of professional artist/teachers and their relationship with creativity. Stated as a question it could read; what relationship is there to an artists' work in the studio and their work as a teacher?

The psychiatrist John Young wrote in his 1985 article, "What is Creativity?", that "creativity is the actualizing of our potential. It is the expression of ourselves in our becoming. It is our 'being becoming.' It is our adventure into the unknown".

Working as a professional sculptor for twenty years and teaching at the art college for the past seven, I have been intensely involved with creativity and am, needless to say, intrigued by its process.

I ask myself, is creativity something you are born with or can it be taught? Are some people more creative than others? Who says when someone is creative and by what criteria are these judgments made?

To state that I do not understand it, grasp it, fully comprehend it, is an understatement. This is not to suggest that I do not have many opinions on its nature, but simply to acknowledge that creativity contains elements that I cannot pin down. Its elusive nature draws me, allowing as it does, for large areas of gray. The old saying "Those who say they know, know least" is given validity in its embrace.

I know creativity exists, I know when it is operative. When functioning, I feel it enveloping my body - I am totally engaged - held and working.

But can I explain it in a few words? The simple answer is, No.

It is as though it is invisible, seen in a momentary glance in the mirror, but as I turn to grasp, it vanishes. I swipe at the disappeared image, my hand whisking the empty air.

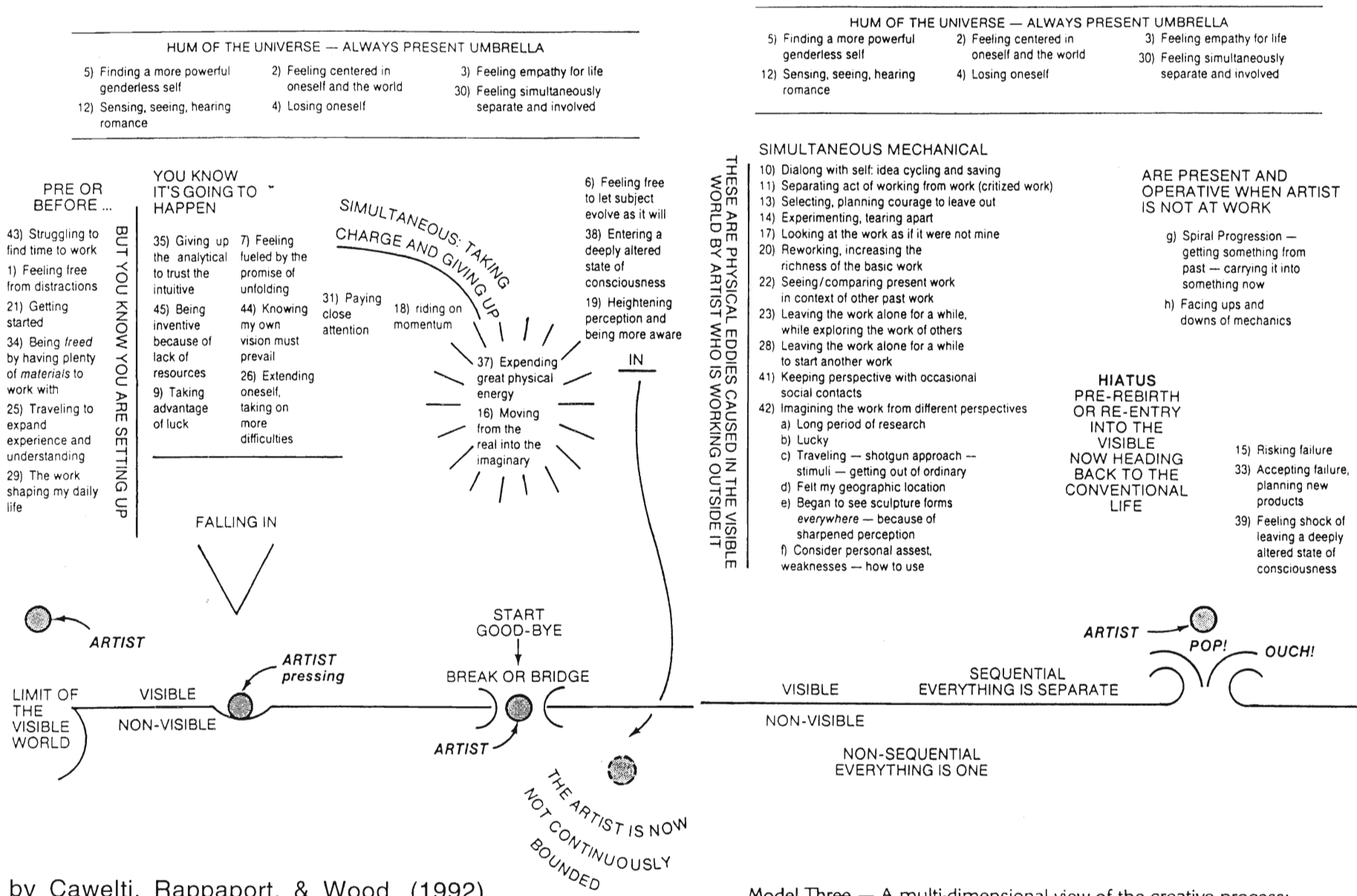
My hope is that by engaging in the process of a qualitative study, I will come to understand creativity, and its relationship to the professional artist/teacher to a greater extent than I presently do.

It is my intention to be open and responsive to what I will learn, and to view the entire journey as a resultant whole.

This study could be termed 'organic research' in the sense that Stout (1995) talks about organic art criticism.

When study in art criticism becomes a challenge to see in unexpected ways, to draw new parallels, and to take things a little further than before, the focus changes from *finding the answer* to *making meaning* ... the process of interpretation as generative and open-ended, with no set answers and no definitively established solutions ... that knowledge and understanding of art are always in the state of flux and growth (p.177).

As Marshal and Rossman, (1989) so eloquently state, "the primary strength of the qualitative approach is ... flexibility, which allows, even encourages, exploration, discovery, and creativity".



by Cawelti, Rappaport, & Wood, (1992).

Model Three — A multi-dimensional view of the creative process: time, space, observability, and consciousness.

Appendix E

Sample Cover Letter Initial Transcript Review

Dear (Participants name),

Enclosed please find the transcript as promised. As I indicated to you at the interview these are not being shared with anyone but yourself.

I am very pleased with the results and wish to thank you again for the opportunity to interview you.

I have now completed interviews with all four of the participants and so will begin the next step, which is to analyze the content for emerging themes. At present I do not know where that is going to go, but I'm looking forward to the ride.

Each of the participant interviews will be edited into a narrative 'story' of which you will receive your copy to make any comments that you deem necessary. There will then be an overview or tying together of the stories - a meta narrative - if you like, of which you will also receive a copy for comment.

Thank you again for your participation without which I would have nothing to work with.

Alex

Appendix F

Sample Cover Letter Sent With 'Stories'

Dear (Participants name),

Enclosed please find the 'narrative story' as promised.

I hope that you can take a moment to read it through, so that you will be familiar with how the transcript has been reworked into its present form.

This is the text as it will appear in my masters thesis Chapter 4. Please note that the text has had all direct mention of your name, specific departments other than the generic name of Foundation removed. The generic name of art college has been applied.

You are referenced by a letter. This can be changed if you would like.

The header that appears on this document is for my reference and does not appear on the thesis copy.

I enjoyed the challenge of working with your words and for the most part have left them in tact. To improve the readability of the text I have reworked some areas. I feel confident that the changes have not altered what you said.

The main area that you will notice changes is in the order of statements. This was done to create a more unified text, I endeavored to build a story with flow. The structure of each narrative in the thesis is similar. I hope this makes for easier reading

If there are any areas that you feel misrepresent what you said or sections that you feel uncomfortable with please make a note of it in the margins.

I hope to be able to make telephone contact with you this weekend to discuss any problems you may have with the text.

Once this is done and changes made, I hope that you will be in agreement to share your narrative with the other participants.

Thank you again for your participation.

Alex

Appendix G

Sample Cover Letter: Call for Closure

Dear (Participants name)

Thank-you for taking the time to read over your 'story' and correct areas as needed. I have made the changes as indicated.

I was delighted to be able to meet with you to discuss it and your feelings towards the interview process in general. This material is important to me as it helps in my analyses, as well as providing valuable additional data.

I have now talked with all four participants. All of you expressed interest in what the others had to say and agreed to share your 'stories' with each other. Hence this package contains your revised text, and the three others for your reading pleasure. I hope that you enjoy reading them, as much as I enjoyed hearing, and creating them

This material is not yet set in stone, a few weeks remain before it becomes so. Please take the opportunity to change, or add to any area that you feel needs it. If you find any typos, or spelling, etc., I would very much appreciate a phone call so that I can make the corrections.

I wish to thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to participate in this study. I appreciated your openness and candor. If there is further information I can provide you with, do not hesitate to call me at the above number.

The complete thesis should be available for general consultation by the fall of 1996, at the Brock University Educational Resources Library.

Have a very enjoyable summer.

Sincerely,

Alex